













THE  
**LIBERAL.**

VERSE AND PROSE FROM THE  
SOUTH.

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VOLUME THE SECOND

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not over strong in their understandings, tho' with respect to the religious part of the business, they are most grossly and "irreligiously" taken in, if they suffer themselves to be persuaded, that it is we who would lessen the divinity of what is really divine. It is these pretended "divines" and their abettors, who lessen us; —those raisers-up of absurd and inhuman imaginations, which they first impudently confound with divine things, and then, because we shew the nonsense of the imaginations, as impudently call their exposers blasphemers. Were we inclined to retort their own terms upon them, we should say that there was nothing in the world more "blasphemous" than such charges of blasphemy. The whole secret is just what we have stated. They first assume unworthy notions of the Divine Spirit, and then because that very Spirit is in fact vindicated from their degradations by an exposure of the absurdity and impossibility of such notions, they assume a divine right to denounce the vindicators, and to rouse up all the fears, weakness, and ignorance of society, in defence of the degradation. Of this stuff have the "Scribes, Pharisees, and Hypocrites" in all ages been made, whenever established opinion was to be divested of any of its corruptions. "He blasphemeth!" quoth the modern tribunal "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" quoth the Quarterly. *This* is the point, which persons who undertake to be didactic in Reviews, should answer, and not a hundred things which we never said.

There is a more generous indignation which we allow might be felt by some persons upon another point, but still owing to real want of information on the subject. We allude to what has been said in the *Liberal* of the late King. The *Vision of Judgment* was written in a fit of indignation and disgust at Mr. Southey's nonsense; and we confess that had we seen a copy of it in Italy, before it went to press (for we had none by us) we should have taken more pains to explain one or two expressions with regard to that Prince. Had the Preface also, entrusted to Mr. Murray, been sent, as it ought to have been, to the new publisher, much of the unintended part of the effect produced upon weak minds

would have been explained away at once ;—that effect, which the hypocritical enemies of the Liberal at once delighted to assist in producing, and most pretended to deprecate. But the virtues of the late King, though of a negative kind, were of a kind nevertheless exceedingly calculated to excite a great many feelings in favour of him in a society like that of England, while his vices (pardon us, dear self-love of our countrymen, for supposing that you *have* vices) were equally calculated to be overlooked in a certain general blindness prevailing on that subject. Yet to those vices,—extreme self-will for instance, sullenness of purpose, a strong natural vindictiveness, &c. was owing the bloody protraction of the American War to those vices, as well as to Mr Pitt's haughty sympathy with them, was mainly owing the general war against liberty which was roused among the despots of the continent : and if certain staid and well-intentioned people suppose, that persons quite as moral and as pious as themselves, could not hold the late King in a light very different from their own, and much more revolting than even we hold it, they are most egregiously mistaken. What was thought of George the Third's natural character by a man of the highest respectability, who knew him intimately at court,—to wit, his own Governor when Prince of Wales,—may be seen by those *who wish to do us justice*, in the Memoirs of James, Earl of Waldegrave, published by the aforesaid Mr. Murray. See also Dr. Franklin's Life, Junius, and the opinion of Mr. Southey's friend, the author of Gebir. What the Earl of Waldegrave prophesied of that character, may be seen also in Mr. Murray's publication. We think that prophecy came to pass. The most pious and virtuous person we ever knew, even in the ordinary sense of those terms (and she might have stood by the side of the most virtuous, in the most extraordinary) thought so too, and taught some of us to think so in our childhood. The ruin of her family and prospects was brought upon her, to her knowledge, by that Prince's temper and obstinacy ; and though the strict religious way in which she was brought up might have induced her to carry too far her opinion

of the *cause* of that calamitous and awful affliction under which he suffered, the parasites of his memory are under a much greater mistake, when instead of turning their knowledge on that point to its great and proper account (which has never yet been hinted even in this great nation of reasoning freemen!) they fancy they can put down all thoughts upon such subjects, and all the unfortunate consequences of such *facts*, by raising a hypocritical cry against a few hasty expressions, uttered in that very spirit of sympathy with the community at large, which they count as nothing.

We cannot close this Advertisement without adding our cordial voice (truly humble on the present occasion) to the universal harmony prevailing in England on the subject of the glorious rights and equally glorious behaviour of Spain. We must also say, how much surprise and relief have been afforded to us by the political plain-speaking (granting even it ends in little more) of the accomplished person who has succeeded that vizor of a statesman, Lord Castlereagh.

THE  
LIBERAL.

No. III.

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THE BLUES,  
A LITERARY ECLOGUE.

“Nimium nē crede colori.”—VIRGIL.

O trust not, ye beautiful creatures, to hue,  
Though your *hair* were as *red* as your *stockings* are *blue*.

ECLOGUE FIRST.

LONDON.—*Before the Door of a Lecture Room.*

*Enter* TRACY, *meeting* INKEL.

INKEL.

YOU'RE too late.

TRACY.

Is it over? •

INKEL.

Nor will be this hour.

But the benches are crammed, like a garden in flower,  
With the pride of our Belles, who have made it the fashion;  
So instead of “*beaux arts*,” we may say “*la belle passion*”



For learning, which lately has taken the lead in  
The world, and set all the fine gentlemen reading.

TRACY.

I know it too well, and have worn out my patience  
With studying to study your new publications.  
There's Vamp, Scamp, and Mouthy, and Wordswords and Co.  
With their damnable—

INKEL.

Hold, my good friend, do you know  
Whom you speak to?

TRACY.

Right well, boy, and so does "the Row:"  
You're an author—a poet—

INKEL.

And think you that I  
Can stand tamely in silence, to hear you decry  
The Muses?

TRACY.

Excuse me; I meant no offence  
To the Nine; though the number who make some pretence  
To their favours is such—but the subject to drop,  
I am just piping hot from a publisher's shop  
(Next door to the pastry-cook's; so that when I  
Cannot find the new volume I wanted to buy  
On the bibliopole's shelves, it is only two paces,  
As one finds every author in one of those places)  
Where I just had been skimming a charming critique,  
So studded with wit, and so sprinkled with Greek!  
Where your friend—you know who—has just got such a  
thrashing,  
That it is, as the phrase goes, extremely "*refreshing*."  
What a beautiful word!

INKEL.

Very true; 'tis so soft  
And so cooling—they use it a little too oft;  
And the papers have got it at last—but no matter.  
So they've cut up our friend then?

TRACY.

Not left him a tatter—  
Not a rag of his present or past reputation,  
Which they call a disgrace to the age and the nation.

INKEL.

I'm sorry to hear this; for friendship, you know—  
Our poor friend!—but I thought it would terminate so.  
Our friendship is such, I'll read nothing to shock it.  
You don't happen to have the Review in your pocket?

TRACY.

No; I left a round dozen of authors and others  
(Very sorry, no doubt, since the cause is a brother's)  
All scrambling and jostling, like so many imps,  
And on fire with impatience to get the next glimpse.

INKEL.

Let us join them.

TRACY.

What, won't you return to the lecture?

INKEL.

Why, the place is so crammed, there's not room for a spectre.  
Besides, our friend Scamp is to-day so absurd—

TRACY.

How can you know that till you hear him?

INKEL.

I heard

Quite enough; and to tell you the truth, my retreat  
Was from his vile nonsense, no less than the heat.

## THE BLUES.

TRACY.

I have had no great loss then?

INKEL.

Loss!—such a palaver!

I'd inoculate sooner my wife with the slaver  
Of a dog when gone rabid, than listen two hours  
To the torrent of trash which around him he pours,  
Pumped up with such effort, disgorged with such labour,  
That—come—do not make me speak ill of one's neighbour.

TRACY.

I make you!

INKEL.

Yes, you! I said nothing until  
You compelled me, by speaking the truth——

TRACY.

*To speak ill?*

Is that your deduction?

INKEL.

When speaking of Scamp ill,  
I certainly *follow*, *not set* an example.  
The fellow's a fool, an impostor, a zany.

TRACY.

And the crowd of to-day shows that one fool makes many.  
But we two will be wise.

INKEL.

Pray, then, let us retire.

TRACY.

I would, but——

•

INKEL.

There must be attraction much higher  
Than Scamp, or the Jews'-harp he nicknames his lyre,  
To call *you* to this hot-bed.

TRACY.

I own it—'tis true—

A fair lady—

INKEL.

A spinster?

TRACY.

Miss Lilac!

INKEL.

The Blue!

The heiress?

TRACY.

The angel!

INKEL.

The devil! why, man!

Pray, get out of this hobble as fast as you can.

You wed with Miss Lilac! 'twould be your perdition:

She's a poet, a chemist, a mathematician.

TRACY.

I say she's an angel.

INKEL.

Say rather an *angle*.

If you and she marry, you'll certainly wrangle.

I say she's a Blue, man, as blue as the ether.

TRACY.

And is that any cause for not coming together?

INKEL.

Humph! I can't say I know any happy alliance  
Which has lately sprung up from a wedlock with science.

She's so learned in all things, and fond of concerning

Herself in all matters connected with learning,

That—

TRACY.

What?

## THE BLUES.

INKEL.

I perhaps may as well hold my tongue ;  
But there's five hundred people can tell you you're wrong.

TRACY.

You forget Lady Lilac's as rich as a Jew.

INKEL.

Is it Miss, or the cash of mamma, you pursue ?

TRACY.

Why, Jack, I'll be frank with you—something of both.  
The girl's a fine girl.

INKEL.

And you feel nothing loth  
To her good lady mother's reversion ; and yet  
Her life is as good as your own, I will bet.

TRACY.

Let her live ; and, as long as she likes, I demand  
Nothing more than the heart of her daughter and hand.

INKEL.

Why, that heart's in the inkstand—that hand on the pen.

TRACY.

Apropos—Will you write me a song now and then ?

INKEL.

To what purpose ?

TRACY.

You know, my dear friend, that in prose  
My talent is decent, as far as it goes ;  
But in rhyme——

INKEL.

You're a terrible stick, to be sure.

TRACY.

I own it ; and yet, in these times, there's no lure  
For the heart of the fair like a stanza or two ;  
And so, æ. I can't, will you furnish a few ?

## THE BLUES.

INKEL.

In your name?

TRACY.

In my name. I will copy them out,  
To slip into her hand at the very next rout.

INKEL.

Are you so far advanced as to hazard this?

TRACY.

Why,

Do you think me subdued by a Blue-stockings' eye,  
So far as to tremble to tell her in rhyme  
What I've told her in prose, at the least, as sublime?

INKEL.

*As sublime!* If it be so, no need of my Muse.

TRACY.

But consider, dear Inkel, she's one of the "Blues."

INKEL.

As sublime!—Mr. Tracy—I've nothing to say.  
Stick to prose—As sublime!!—but I wish you good day.

TRACY.

Nay, stay, my dear fellow—consider—I'm wrong;  
I own it; but, prithee, compose me the song.

INKEL.

*As sublime!!*

TRACY.

I but used the expression in haste.

INKEL.

That may be, Mr. Tracy, but shows damned bad taste.

TRACY.

I own it—I know it—acknowledge it—what  
Can I say to you more?

INKEL.

I see what you'd be at

You disparage my parts with insidious abuse,  
Till you think you can turn them best to your own use.

TRACY.

And is that not a sign I respect them?

INKEL.

Why that  
To be sure makes a difference.

TRACY.

I know what is what :

And you, who're a man of the gay world, no less  
Than a poet of t'other, may easily guess  
That I never could mean, by a word, to offend  
A genius like you, and moreover my friend.

INKEL.

No doubt; you by this time should know what is due  
To a man of——but come——let us shake hands.

TRACY.

You knew,

And you *know*, my dear fellow, how heartily I,  
Whatever you publish, am ready to buy.

INKEL.

That's my bookseller's business; I care not for sale;  
Indeed the best poems at first rather fail.  
There were Renegade's epics, and Botherby's plays,  
And my own grand romance——

TRACY.

Had its full share of praise.  
I myself saw it puffed in the "Old Girl's Review."

INKEL.

What Review?

TRACY.

'Tis the English "Journal de Trevoux;"

A clerical work of our Jesuits at home.

Have you never yet seen it?

INKEL.

That pleasure's to come.

TRACY.

Make haste then.

INKEL.

Why so?

TRACY.

I have heard people say,  
That it threatened to give up the *ghost* t'other day.

INKEL.

Well, that is a sign of some *spirit*.

TRACY.

No doubt.

Shall you be at the Countess of Fiddlecome's rout?

INKEL.

I've a card, and shall go; but at present, as soon  
As friend Scamp shall be pleased to step down from the  
moon

(Where he seems to be soaring in search of his wits)  
And an interval grants from his lecturing fits,  
I'm engaged to the Lady Bluebottle's collation,  
To partake of a luncheon and learn'd conversation:  
'Tis a sort of re-union for Scamp, on the days  
Of his lecture, to treat him with cold tongue and praise.  
And I own, for my own part, that 'tis not unpleasant.  
Will you go? There's Miss Llac will also be present.

TRACY.

That "metal's attractive."

INKEL.

No doubt—to the pocket.



ISAAC.

You should rather encourage my passion than shock it.  
But let us proceed ; for I think, by the hum——

INKEL.

Very true ; let us go, then, before they can come,  
Or else we'll be kept here an hour at their levy,  
On the rack of cross questions, by all the blue bevy.  
Hark ! Zounds, they'll be on us ; I know by the drone  
Of old Botherby's spouting, ex-cathedrâ tone.  
Aye ! there he is at it. Poor Scamp ! better join  
Your friends, or he'll pay you back in your own coin.

TRACY.

All fair ; 'tis but lecture for lecture.

INKEL.

That's clear.

But for God's sake let's go, or the bore will be here.  
Come, come : nay, I'm off. [Exit INKEL.

TRACY.

You are right, and I'll follow ;  
'Tis high time for a "*Sic me servavit Apollo*."  
And yet we shall have the whole crew on our kibes,  
Blues, dandies, and dowagers, and second-hand scribes,  
All flocking to moisten their exquisite throttles  
With a glass of Madeira at Lady Bluebottle's.

[Exit TRACY.

*End of Eclogue First.*

## ECLOGUE SECOND.

*An Apartment in the House of LADY BLUEBOTTLE.—A Table prepared.*

SIR RICHARD BLUEBOTTLE *solus*.

Was there ever a man who was married so sorry?  
 Like a fool, I must needs do the thing in a hurry.  
 My life is reversed, and my quiet destroyed;  
 My days, which once pass'd in so gentle a void,  
 Must now, every hour of the twelve, be employed;  
 The twelve, do I say?—of the whole twenty-four,  
 Is there one which I dare call my own any more?  
 What with driving, and visiting, dancing, and dining,  
 What with learning, and teaching, and scribbling, and  
 shining,

In science and art, I'll be curst if I know  
 Myself from my wife; for although we are two,  
 Yet she somehow contrives that all things shall be done  
 In a style which proclaims us eternally one.  
 But the thing of all things which distresses me more  
 Than the bills of the week (though they trouble me sore)  
 Is the numerous, humourous, back-biting crew  
 Of scribblers, wits, lecturers, white, black, and blue,  
 Who are brought to my house as an inn, to my cost  
 (For the bill here, it seems, is defrayed by the host)  
 No pleasure! no leisure! no thought for my pains,  
 But to hear a vile jargon which addles my brains;

A smatter and chatter, gleaned out of reviews,  
 By the rag, tag, and bobtail, of those they call "Blues;"  
 A rabble who know not——But soft, here they come!  
 Would to God I were deaf! as I'm not, I'll be dumb.

*Enter* LADY BLUEBOTTLE, MISS LILAC, LADY BLUE-  
 MOUNT, MR. BOTHERBY, INKEL, TRACY, MISS MA-  
 ZARINE, *and others, with* SCAMP *the Lecturer, &c. &c.*

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Ah! Sir Richard, good morning; I've brought you some  
 friends.

SIR RICHARD *bows, and afterwards aside.*

If friends, they're the first.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

But the luncheon attends.

I pray ye be seated, "*sans ceremonie.*"

Mr. Scamp, you're fatigued; take your chair there, next me.

*[They all sit.]*

SIR RICHARD, *aside.*

If he does, his fatigue is to come.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Mr. Tracy—

Lady Bluemount—Miss Lilac—be pleased, pray, to place ye;  
 And you, Mr. Botherby—

BOTHERBY.

Oh, my dear Lady,

I obey.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Mr. Inkel, I ought to upbraid ye;  
 You were not at the lecture.

INKEL.

Excuse me, I was,

But the heat forced me out in the best part—alas!  
And when——

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

To be sure it was broiling; but then  
You have lost such a lecture!

BOTHERBY.

The best of the ten.

TRACY.

How can you know that? there are two more.

BOTHERBY.

Because

I defy him to beat this day's wondrous applause.  
The very walls shook.

INKEL.

Oh, if that be the test,  
I allow our friend Scamp has this day done his best.  
Miss Lilac, permit me to help you?—a wing?

MISS LILAC.

No more, Sir, I thank you. Who lectures next Spring?

BOTHERBY.

Dick Dunder.

INKEL.

That is, if he lives.

MISS LILAC.

And why not?

INKEL.

No reason whatever, save that he's a sot.  
Lady Bluemount! a glass of Madeira?

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

With pleasure.

INKEL.

How does your friend Wordswords, that Windermere treasure?

Does he stick to his lakes, like the leeches he sings,  
And their gatherers, as Homer sung warriors and kings?

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

He has just got a place.

INKEL.

As a footman?

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

For shame!

Nor profane with your sneers so poetic a name.

INKEL.

Nay, I meant him no evil, but pitied his master;  
For the poet of pedlars 'twere, sure, no disaster  
To wear a new livery; the more, as 'tis not  
The first time he has turned both his creed and his coat.

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

For shame! I repeat. If Sir George could but hear——

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Never mind our friend Inkel; we all know, my dear,  
'Tis his way.

SIR RICHARD.

But this place——

INKEL.

Is perhaps like friend Scamp's,

A lecturer's.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Excuse me——'tis one in "the Stamps:"

He is made a Collector.

TRACY.

Collector!

SIR RICHARD.

How?

MISS LILAC.

What?

INKEL.

I shall think of him oft when I buy a new hat ;  
There his works will appear——

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

Sir, they reach to the Ganges.

INKEL.

I shan't go so far—I can have them at Grange's.\*

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Oh fie !

MISS LILAC.

And for shame !

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

You're too bad.

BOTHERBY.

Very good !

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

How good ?

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

He means nought—'tis his phrase.

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

He grows rude.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

He means nothing ; nay, ask him.

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

Pray, Sir ! did you mean

What you say ?

INKEL.

Never mind if he did ; 'twill be seen  
That whatever he means won't alloy what he says.

BOTHERBY.

Sir !

\* Grange is or was a famous pastry-cook and fruiterer in Piccadilly.

INKEL.

“Pray be content with your portion of praise ;  
’Twas in your defence.

BOTHERBY.

If you please, with submission,  
I can make out my own.

INKEL.

It would be your perdition.  
While you live, my dear Botherby, never defend  
Yourself or your works ; but leave both to a friend.  
Apropos—Is your play then accepted at last ?

BOTHERBY.

At last ?

INKEL.

Why I thought—that’s to say—there had past  
A few Green-room whispers, which hinted—you know  
That the taste of the actors at best is so so.

BOTHERBY.

Sir, the Green-room’s in raptures, and so’s the Committee.

INKEL.

Aye—yours are the plays for exciting our “pity  
And fear,” as the Greek says : for “purging the mind,”  
I doubt if you’ll leave us an equal behind.

BOTHERBY.

I have written the prologue, and meant to have prayed  
For a spice of your wit in an epilogue’s aid.

INKEL.

Well, time enough yet, when the play’s to be played.  
Is it cast yet ?

BOTHERBY.

The actors are fighting for parts,  
As is usual in that most litigious of arts.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

We'll all make a party, and go the *first* night.

TRACY.

And you promised the epilogue, Inkel.

INKEL.

Not quite.

However, to save my friend, Botherby, trouble,  
I'll do what I can, though my pains must be double.

TRACY.

Why so?

INKEL.

To do justice to what goes before.

BOTHERBY.

Sir, I'm happy to say, I've no fears on that score.  
Your parts, Mr. Inkel, are——

INKEL.

Never mind *mine*;

Stick to those of your play, which is quite your own line.

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

You're a fugitive writer, I think, Sir, of rhymes?

INKEL.

Yes, Ma'am; and a fugitive reader sometimes.  
On Wordswords, for instance, I seldom alight,  
Or on Mouthey, his friend, without taking to flight.

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

Sir, your taste is too common; but time and posterity  
Will right these great men, and this age's severity  
Become its reproach.

INKEL.

I've no sort of objection,  
So I am not of the party to take the infection.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Perhaps you have doubts that they ever will *take*!



## THE BLUES.

INKEL.

Not at all; on the contrary, those of the lake  
Have taken already, and still will continue  
To take—what they can, from a groat to a guinea,  
Of pension or place;—but the subject's a bore.

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

Well, Sir, the time's coming.

INKEL.

Scamp! don't you feel soic?

What say you to this?

SCAMP.

They have merit, I own;  
Though their system's absurdity keeps it unknown.

INKEL.

Then why not unearth it in one of your lectures!

SCAMP.

It is only time past which comes under my strictures.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Come, a truce with all tartness;—the joy of my heart  
Is to see Nature's triumph o'er all that is art.  
Wild Nature!—Grand Shakspeare!

BOTHERBY.

And down Aristotle!

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

Sir George thinks exactly with Lady Bluebottle;  
And my Lord Seventy-four, who protects our dear Bard,  
And who gave him his place, has the greatest regard  
For the poet, who, singing of pedlars and asses,  
Has found out the way to dispense with Parnassus.

TRACY.

And you. Scamp!—

SCAMP.

I needs must confess, I'm embarrassed.

INKEL.

Don't call upon Scamp, who's already so harassed  
 With old *schools*, and new *schools*, and no *schools*, and all *schools*.

TRACY.

Well, one thing is certain, that *some* must be fools.  
 I should like to know who.

INKEL.

And I should not be sorry  
 To know who are *not* :—it would save us some worry.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

A truce with remark, and let nothing controul  
 This "feast of our reason, and flow of the soul."  
 Oh, my dear Mr. Botherby! sympathise!—I  
 Now feel such a rapture, I'm ready to fly,  
 I feel so elastic,—"*so buoyant—so buoyant!*"\*

INKEL.

Tracy! open the window.

TRACY.

I wish her much joy on't.

BOTHERBY.

For God's sake, my Lady Bluebottle, check not  
 This gentle emotion, so seldom our lot  
 Upon earth. Give it way; 'tis an impulse which lifts  
 Our spirits from earth; the sublimest of gifts;  
 For which poor Prometheus was chain'd to his mountain.  
 'Tis the source of all sentiment—feeling's true fountain:  
 'Tis the Vision of Heaven upon Earth: 'tis the gas  
 Of the soul: 'tis the seizing of shades as they pass,  
 And making them substance: 'tis something divine:—

INKEL.

Shall I help you, my friend, to a little more wine?

\* Fact from life, with the words.

BOTHERBY.

I thank you. Not any more, Sir, till I dine.

INKEL.

Apropos!—Do you dine with Sir Humphrey to day?

TRACY.

I should think with *Duke* Humphrey was more in your way,

INKEL.

It might be of yore; but we authors now look  
To the knight, as a landlord, much more than the Duke.  
The truth is—each writer now quite at his ease is,  
And (except with his publisher) dines where he pleases.  
But 'tis now nearly five, and I must to the Park.

TRACY.

And I'll take a turn with you there till 'tis dark.  
And you, Scamp—

SCAMP.

Excuse me; I must to my notes,  
For my lecture next week.

INKEL.

He must mind whom he quotes  
Out of "Elegant Extracts."

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Well, now we break up;  
But remember Miss Diddle invites us to sup.

INKEL.

Then at two hours past midnight we all meet again,  
For the sciences, sandwiches, hock and champaigne!

TRACY.

And the sweet lobster sallad!

BOTHERBY.

I honour that meal;  
For 'tis then that our feelings most genuinely—feel.

INKEL.

True ; feeling is ~~truest~~ *then*, far beyond question ;  
 I wish to the gods 'twas the same with digestion !

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Pshaw !—never mind that ; for one moment of feeling  
 Is worth—God knows what.

INKEL.

'Tis at least worth concealing  
 For itself, or what follows——But here comes your carriage.

SIR RICHARD (*aside*).

I wish all these people were d——d with *my* marriage !  
 [*Exeunt.*]

*End of Eclogue the Second.*



## MY FIRST ACQUAINTANCE WITH POETS.

My father was a Dissenting Minister at W—m in Shropshire; and in the year 1798 (the figures that compose that date are to me like the “dreaded name of Demogorgon”) Mr. Coleridge came to Shrewsbury, to succeed Mr. Rowe in the spiritual charge of a Unitarian Congregation there. He did not come till late on the Saturday afternoon before he was to preach; and Mr. Rowe, who himself went down to the coach in a state of anxiety and expectation, to look for the arrival of his successor, could find no one at all answering the description but a round-faced man in a short black coat (like a shooting-jacket) which hardly seemed to have been made for him, but who seemed to be talking at a great rate to his fellow-passengers. Mr. Rowe had scarce returned to give an account of his disappointment, when the round-faced man in black entered, and dissipated all doubts on the subject, by beginning to talk. He did not cease while he staid; nor has he since, that I know of. He held the good town of Shrewsbury in delightful suspense for three weeks that he remained there, “fluttering the *proud Salopians* like an eagle in a dove-cote;” and the Welch mountains that skirt the horizon with their tempestuous confusion, agree to have heard no such mystic sounds since the days of

“High-born Hoel’s harp or soft Llewellyn’s lay!”

As we passed along between W—m and Shrewsbury, and I eyed their blue-tops seen through the wintry branches, or

the red rustling leaves of the sturdy oak-trees by the road-side, a sound was in my ears as of a Siren's song; I was stunned, startled with it, as from deep sleep; but I had no notion then that I should ever be able to express my admiration to others in motley imagery or quaint allusion, till the light of his genius shone into my soul, like the sun's rays glittering in the puddles of the road. I was at that time dumb, inarticulate, helpless, like a worm by the way-side, crushed, bleeding, lifeless; but now, bursting from the deadly bands that "bound them,

"With Styx nine times round them,"

my ideas float on winged words, and as they expand their plumes, catch the golden light of other years. My soul has indeed remained in its original bondage, dark, obscure, with longings infinite and unsatisfied; my heart, shut up in the prison-house of this rude clay, has never found, nor will it ever find, a heart to speak to; but that my understanding also did not remain dumb and brutish, or at length found a language to express itself, I owe to Coleridge. But this is not to my purpose.

My father lived ten miles from Shrewsbury, and was in the habit of exchanging visits with Mr Rowe, and with Mr. Jenkins of Whitchurch (nine miles farther on) according to the custom of Dissenting Ministers in each other's neighbourhood. A line of communication is thus established, by which the flame of civil and religious liberty is kept alive, and nourishes its smouldering fire unquenchable, like the fires in the Agamemnon of *Æschylus*, placed at different stations, that waited for ten long years to announce with their blazing pyramids the destruction of Troy. Coleridge had agreed to come over to see my father, according to the courtesy of the

country, as Mr. Rowe's probable successor; but in the mean time I had gone to hear him preach the Sunday after his arrival. A poet and a philosopher getting up into a Unitarian pulpit to preach the Gospel, was a romance in these degenerate days, a sort of revival of the primitive spirit of Christianity, which was not to be resisted.

It was in January, 1798, that I rose one morning before day-light, to walk ten miles in the mud, and went to hear this celebrated person preach. Never, the longest day I have to live, shall I have such another walk as this cold, raw, comfortless one, in the winter of the year 1798.—  
*Il y a des impressions que ni le tems ni les circonstances peuvent effacer. Dusse-je vivre des siècles entiers, le doux tems de ma jeunesse ne peut renaitre pour moi, ni s'effacer jamais dans ma mémoire.* When I got there, the organ was playing the 100th psalm, and, when it was done, Mr. Coleridge rose and gave out his text, "And he went up into the mountain to pray, HIMSELF, ALONE." As he gave out this text, his voice "rose like a steam of rich distilled perfumes," and when he came to the two last words, which he pronounced loud, deep, and distinct, it seemed to me, who was then young, as if the sounds had echoed from the bottom of the human heart, and as if that prayer might have floated in solemn silence through the universe. The idea of St. John came into mind, "of one crying in the wilderness, who had his loins girt about, and whose food was locusts and wild honey." The preacher then launched into his subject, like an eagle dallying with the wind. The sermon was upon peace and war; upon church and state—not their alliance, but their separation—on the spirit of the world and the spirit of Christianity, not as the same, but as opposed to one another. He talked of those who had "inscribed the cross of Christ on banners dripping with human gore." He made



a poetical and pastoral excursion,—and to shew the fatal effects of war, drew a striking contrast between the simple shepherd boy, driving his team afield, or sitting under the hawthorn, piping to his flock, “as though he should never be old,” and the same poor country-lad, crimped, kidnapped, brought into town, made drunk at an alehouse, turned into a wretched drummer-boy, with his hair sticking on end with powder and pomatum, a long cue at his back, and tricked out in the loathsome finery of the profession of blood.

“Such were the notes our once-lov’d poet sung.”

And for myself, I could not have been more delighted if I had heard the music of the spheres. Poetry and Philosophy had met together, Truth and Genius had embraced, under the eye and with the sanction of Religion. This was even beyond my hopes. I returned home well satisfied. The sun that was still labouring pale and wan through the sky, obscured by thick mists, seemed an emblem of the *good cause*; and the cold dank drops of dew that hung half melted on the beard of the thistle, had something genial and refreshing in them; for there was a spirit of hope and youth in all nature, that turned every thing into good. The face of nature had not then the brand of *JUS DIVINUM* on it:

“Like to that sanguine flower inscrib’d with woe.”

On the Tuesday following, the half-inspired speaker came. I was called down into the room where he was, and went half-hoping, half-afraid. He received me very graciously, and I listened for a long time without uttering a word. I did not suffer in his opinion by my silence. “For those two hours,” he afterwards was pleased to say, “he was conversing with W. H.’s forehead!” His appearance was different from what I had anticipated from seeing him before. At a

distance, and in the dim light of the chapel, there was to me a strange wildness in his aspect, a dusky obscurity, and I thought him pitted with the small-pox. His complexion was at that time clear, and even bright—

“As are the children of you are sheen.”

His forehead was broad and high, light as if built of ivory, with large projecting eyebrows, and his eyes rolling beneath them like a sea with darkened lustre. “A certain tender bloom his face o’erspread,” a purple tinge as we see it in the pale thoughtful complexions of the Spanish portrait-painters, Murillo and Velasquez. His mouth was gross, voluptuous, open, eloquent; his chin good-humoured and round; but his nose, the rudder of the face, the index of the will, was small, feeble, nothing—like what he has done. It might seem that the genius of his face as from a height surveyed and projected him (with sufficient capacity and huge aspiration) into the world unknown of thought and imagination, with nothing to support or guide his veering purpose, as if Columbus had launched his adventurous course for the New World in a scallop, without oars or compass. So at least I comment on it after the event. Coleridge in his person was rather above the common size, inclining to the corpulent, or like Lord Hamlet, “somewhat fat and puffy.” His hair (now, alas! grey) was then black and glossy as the raven’s, and fell in smooth masses over his forehead. This long pendulous hair is peculiar to enthusiasts, to those whose minds tend heavenward; and is traditionally inseparable (though of a different colour) from the pictures of Christ. It ought to belong, as a character, to all who preach *Christ crucified*, and Coleridge was at that time one of those!

It was curious to observe the contrast between him and

my father, who was a veteran in the cause, and then declining into the vale of years. He had been a poor Irish lad, carefully brought up by his parents, and sent to the University of Glasgow (where he studied under Adam Smith) to prepare him for his future destination. It was his mother's proudest wish to see her son a Dissenting Minister. So if we look back to past generations (as far as eye can reach) we see the same hopes, fears, wishes, followed by the same disappointments, throbbing in the human heart; and so we may see them (if we look forward) rising up for ever, and disappearing, like vapourish bubbles, in the human breast! After being tossed about from congregation to congregation in the heats of the Unitarian controversy, and squabbles about the American war, he had been relegated to an obscure village, where he was to spend the last thirty years of his life, far from the only converse that he loved, the talk about disputed texts of Scripture and the cause of civil and religious liberty. Here he passed his days, repining but resigned, in the study of the Bible, and the perusal of the Commentators,—huge folios, not easily got through, one of which would outlast a winter! Why did he pore on these from morn to night (with the exception of a walk in the fields or a turn in the garden to gather brocoli-plants or kidney-beans of his own rearing, with no small degree of pride and pleasure)?—Here were “no figures nor no fantasies,”—neither poetry nor philosophy—nothing to dazzle, nothing to excite modern curiosity; but to his lack-lustre eyes there appeared, within the pages of the ponderous, unwieldy, neglected tomes, the sacred name of JEHOVAH in Hebrew capitals: pressed down by the weight of the style, worn to the last fading thinness of the understanding, there were glimpses, glimmering notions of the patriarchal wanderings, with palm-trees hovering in the horizon, and processions of camels at

the distance of three thousand years; there was Moses with the Burning Bush, the number of the Twelve Tribes, types, shadows, glosses on the law and the prophets; there were discussions (dull enough) on the age of Methuselah, a mighty speculation! there were outlines, rude guesses at the shape of Noah's Ark and of the riches of Solomon's Temple; questions as to the date of the creation, predictions of the end of all things; the great lapses of time, the strange mutations of the globe were unfolded with the voluminous leaf, as it turned over; and though the soul might slumber with an hieroglyphic veil of inscrutable mysteries drawn over it, yet it was in a slumber ill-exchanged for all the sharpened realities of sense, wit, fancy, or reason. My father's life was comparatively a dream; but it was a dream of infinity and eternity, of death, the resurrection, and a judgment to come!

No two individuals were ever more unlike than were the host and his guest. A poet was to my father a sort of non-descript: yet whatever added grace to the Unitarian cause was to him welcome. He could hardly have been more surprised or pleased, if our visitor had worn wings. Indeed, his thoughts had wings; and as the silken sounds rustled round our little wainscoted parlour, my father threw back his spectacles over his forehead, his white hairs mixing with its sanguine hue; and a smile of delight beamed across his rugged cordial face, to think that Truth had found a new ally in Fancy!\* Besides, Coleridge seemed to take considerable notice of me, and that of itself was enough. He talked very

\* My father was one of those who mistook his talent after all. He used to be very much dissatisfied that I preferred his Letters to his Sermons. The last were forced and dry; the first came naturally from him. For ease, half-plays on words, and a supine, monkish, indolent pleasantry, I have never seen them equalled.

familiarly, but agreeably, and glanced over a variety of subjects. At dinner-time he grew more animated, and dilated in a very edifying manner on Mary Wolstonecraft and Mackintosh. The last, he said, he considered (on my father's speaking of his *Vindiciæ Gallicæ* as a capital performance) as a clever scholastic man—a master of the topics,—or as the ready warehouseman of letters, who knew exactly where to lay his hand on what he wanted, though the goods were not his own. He thought him no match for Burke, either in style or matter. Burke was a metaphysician, Mackintosh a mere logician. Burke was an orator (almost a poet) who reasoned in figures, because he had an eye for nature: Mackintosh, on the other hand, was a rhetorician, who had only an eye to common-places. On this I ventured to say that I had always entertained a great opinion of Burke, and that (as far as I could find) the speaking of him with contempt might be made the test of a vulgar democratical mind. This was the first observation I ever made to Coleridge, and he said it was a very just and striking one. I remember the leg of Welsh mutton and the turnips on the table that day had the finest flavour imaginable. Coleridge added that Mackintosh and Tom. Wedgwood (of whom, however, he spoke highly) had expressed a very indifferent opinion of his friend Mr. Wordsworth, on which he remarked to them—"He strides on so far before you, that he dwindles in the distance!" Godwin had once boasted to him of having carried on an argument with Mackintosh for three hours with dubious success; Coleridge told him—"If there had been a man of genius in the room, he would have settled the question in five minutes." He asked me if I had ever seen Mary Wolstonecraft, and I said, I had once for a few moments, and that she seemed to me to turn off Godwin's objections to something she advanced with quite a playful, easy air. He

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replied, that "this was only one instance of the ascendancy which people of imagination exercised over those of mere intellect." He did not rate Godwin very high \* (this was sapience or prejudice, real or affected) but he had a great idea of Mrs. Wolstonecraft's powers of conversation, none at all of her talent for book-making. We talked a little about Holcroft. He had been asked if he was not much struck with him, and he said, he thought himself in more danger of being struck by him. I complained that he would not let me get on at all, for he required a definition of every the commonest word, exclaiming, "What do you mean by a *sensation*, Sir? What do you mean by an *idea*?" This, Coleridge said, was barricading the road to truth:—it was setting up a turnpike-gate at every step we took. I forget a great number of things, many more than I remember; but the day passed off pleasantly, and the next morning Mr. Coleridge was to return to Shrewsbury. When I came down to breakfast, I found that he had just received a letter from his friend, T. Wedgwood, making him an offer of £150. a-year if he chose to wave his present pursuit, and devote himself entirely to the study of poetry and philosophy. Coleridge seemed to make up his mind to close with this proposal in the act of tying on one of his shoes. It threw an additional damp on his departure. It took the wayward enthusiast quite from us to cast him into Deva's winding vales, or by the shores of old romance. Instead of living at ten miles distance, of being the pastor of a Dissenting congregation at Shrewsbury, he was henceforth to inhabit the

\* He complained in particular of the presumption of his attempting to establish the future immortality of man, "without" (as he said) "knowing what Death was or what Life was"—and the tone in which he pronounced these two words seemed to convey a complete image of both."

Hill of Parnassus, to be a Shepherd on the Delightful Mountains. Alas! I knew not the way thither, and felt very little gratitude for Mr. Wedgwood's bounty. I was presently relieved from this dilemma; for Mr. Coleridge, asking for a pen and ink, and going to a table to write something on a bit of card, advanced towards me with undulating step, and giving me the precious document, said that that was his address, *Mr. Coleridge, Nether-Stowey, Somersetshire*; and that he should be glad to see me there in a few weeks' time, and, if I chose, would come half-way to meet me. I was not less surprised than the shepherd-boy (this simile is to be found in Cassandra) when he sees a thunder-bolt fall close at his feet. I stammered out my acknowledgments and acceptance of this offer (I thought Mr. Wedgwood's annuity a trifle to it) as well as I could; and this mighty business being settled, the poet-preacher took leave, and I accompanied him six miles on the road. It was a fine morning in the middle of winter, and he talked the whole way. The scholar in Chaucer is described as going

— "Sounding on his way."

So Coleridge went on his. In digressing, in dilating, in passing from subject to subject, he appeared to me to float in air, to slide on ice. He told me in confidence (going along) that he should have preached two sermons before he accepted the situation at Shrewsbury, one on Infant Baptism, the other on the Lord's Supper, shewing that he could not administer either, which would have effectually disqualified him for the object in view. I observed that he continually crossed me on the way by shifting from one side of the foot-path to the other. This struck me as an odd movement; but I did not at that time connect it with any instability of purpose or involuntary change of principle, as I have done since. He

seemed unable to keep on in a strait line. He spoke slightly of Hume (whose Essay on Miracles he said was stolen from an objection started in one of South's Sermons—*Credat Judæus Apella!*). I was not very much pleased at this account of Hume, for I had just been reading, with infinite relish, that completest of all metaphysical *choke-pears*, his *Treatise on Human Nature*, to which the *Essays*, in point of scholastic subtlety and close reasoning, are mere elegant trifling; light summer-reading. Coleridge even denied the excellence of Hume's general style, which I think betrayed a want of taste or candour. He however made me amends by the manner in which he spoke of Berkeley. He dwelt particularly on his *Essay on Vision* as a masterpicce of analytical reasoning. So it undoubtedly is. He was exceedingly angry with Dr. Johnson for striking the stone with his foot, in allusion to this author's Theory of Matter and Spirit, and saying, "Thus I confute him, Sir." Coleridge drew a parallel (I don't know how he brought about the connection) between Bishop Berkeley and Tom Paine. He said the one was an instance of a subtle, the other of an acute mind, than which no two things could be more distinct. The one was a shop-boy's quality, the other the characteristic of a philosopher. He considered Bishop Butler as a true philosopher, a profound and conscientious thinker, a genuine reader of nature and of his own mind. He did not speak of his *Analogy*, but of his *Sermons at the Rolls' Chapel*, of which I had never heard. Coleridge somehow always contrived to prefer the *unknown* to the *known*. In this instance he was right. The *Analogy* is a tissue of sophistry, of wire-drawn, theological special-pleading; the *Sermons* (with the Preface to them), are in a fine vein of deep, matured reflection, a candid appeal to our observation of human nature, without pedantry and without bias. I told Coleridge I had written a few remarks, and was



sometimes foolish enough to believe that I had made a discovery on the same subject (the *Natural Disinterestedness of the Human Mind*)—and I tried to explain my view of it to Coleridge, who listened with great willingness, but I did not succeed in making myself understood. I sat down to the task shortly afterwards for the twentieth time, got new pens and paper, determined to make clear work of it, wrote a few meagre sentences in the skeleton-style of a mathematical demonstration, stopped half-way down the second page; and, after trying in vain to pump up any words, images, notions, apprehensions, facts, or observations, from that gulph of abstraction in which I had plunged myself for four or five years preceding, gave up the attempt as labour in vain, and shed tears of helpless despondency on the blank unfinished paper. I can write fast enough now. Am I better than I was then? Oh no! One truth discovered, one pang of regret at not being able to express it, is better than all the fluency and flippancy in the world. Would that I could go back to what I then was! Why can we not revive past times as we can revisit old places? If I had the quaint Muse of Sir Philip Sidney to assist me, I would write a *Sonnet to the Road between W—m and Shrewsbury*, and immortalise every step of it by some fond enigmatical conceit. I would swear that the very milestones had ears, and that Harmer-hill stooped with all its pines, to listen to a poet, as he passed! I remember but one other topic of discourse in this walk. He mentioned Paley, praised the naturalness and clearness of his style, but condemned his sentiments, thought him a mere time-serving casuist, and said that “the fact of his work on *Moral and Political Philosophy* being made a text-book in our Universities was a disgrace to the national character.” We parted at the six-mile stone; and I returned homeward pensive but much pleased. I had met with unexpected

notice from a person, whom I believed to have been prejudiced against me. "Kind and affable to me had been his condescension, and should be honoured ever with suitable regard." He was the first poet I had known, and he certainly answered to that inspired name. I had heard a great deal of his powers of conversation, and was not disappointed. In fact, I never met with any thing at all like them, either before or since. I could easily credit the accounts which were circulated of his holding forth to a large party of ladies and gentlemen, an evening or two before, on the Berkeleian Theory, when he made the whole material universe look like a transparency of fine words; and another story (which I believe he has somewhere told himself) of his being asked to a party at Birmingham, of his smoking tobacco and going to sleep after dinner on a sofa, where the company found him to their no small surprise, which was increased to wonder when he started up of a sudden, and rubbing his eyes, looked about him, and launched into a three-hours' description of the third heaven, of which he had had a dream, very different from Mr. Southey's Vision of Judgment, and also from that other Vision of Judgment, which Mr. Murray, the Secretary of the Bridge-street Junta, has taken into his especial keeping!

On my way back, I had a sound in my ears, it was the voice of Fancy: I had a light before me, it was the face of Poetry. The one still lingers there, the other has not quitted my side! Coleridge in truth met me half-way on the ground of philosophy, or I should not have been won over to his imaginative creed. I had an uneasy, pleasurable sensation all the time, till I was to visit him. During those months the chill breath of winter gave me a welcoming; the vernal air was balm and inspiration to me. The golden sun-sets, the silver star of evening, lighted me on my way to

new hopes and prospects. *I was to visit Coleridge in the Spring.* This circumstance was never absent from my thoughts, and mingled with all my feelings. I wrote to him at the time proposed, and received an answer postponing my intended visit for a week or two, but very cordially urging me to complete my promise then. This delay did not damp, but rather increase my ardour. In the mean time, I went to Llangollen Vale, by way of initiating myself in the mysteries of natural scenery; and I must say I was enchanted with it. I had been reading Coleridge's description of England, in his fine *Ode on the Departing Year*, and I applied it, *con amore*, to the objects before me. That valley was to me (in a manner) the cradle of a new existence: in the river that winds through it, my spirit was baptised in the waters of Helicon!

I returned home, and soon after set out on my journey with unworn heart and untried feet. My way lay through Worcester and Gloucester, and by Upton, where I thought of Tom Jones and the adventure of the muff. I remember getting completely wet through one day, and stopping at an inn (I think it was at Tewkesbury) where I sat up all night to read Paul and Virginia. Sweet were the showers in early youth that drenched my body, and sweet the drops of pity that fell upon the books I read! I recollect a remark of Coleridge's upon this very book, that nothing could shew the gross indelicacy of French manners and the entire corruption of their imagination more strongly than the behaviour of the heroine in the last fatal scene, who turns away from a person on board the sinking vessel, that offers to save her life, because he has thrown off his clothes to assist him in swimming. Was this a time to think of such a circumstance? I once hinted to Wordsworth, as we were sailing in his boat on Grasmere lake, that I thought he had borrowed

the idea of his *Poems on the Naming of Places* from the local inscriptions of the same kind in Paul and Virginia. He did not own the obligation, and stated some distinction without a difference, in defence of his claim to originality. Any the slightest variation would be sufficient for this purpose in his mind; for whatever he added or omitted would inevitably be worth all that any one else had done, and contain the marrow of the sentiment.—I was still two days before the time fixed for my arrival, for I had taken care to set out early enough. I stopped these two days at Bridgewater, and when I was tired of sauntering on the banks of its muddy river, returned to the inn, and read Camilla. So have I loitered my life away, reading books, looking at pictures, going to plays, hearing, thinking, writing on what pleased me best. I have wanted only one thing to make me happy; but wanting that, have wanted every thing!

I arrived, and was well received. The country about Nether Stowey is beautiful, green and hilly, and near the sea-shore. I saw it but the other day, after an interval of twenty years, from a hill near Taunton. How was the map of my life spread out before me, as the map of the country lay at my feet! In the afternoon, Coleridge took me over to All-Foxden, a romantic old family-mansion of the St. Aubins, where Wordsworth lived. It was then in the possession of a friend of the poet's, who gave him the free use of it. Somehow that period (the time just after the French Revolution) was not a time when *nothing was given for nothing*. The mind opened, and a softness might be perceived coming over the heart of individuals, beneath "the scales that fence" our self-interest. Wordsworth himself was from home, but his sister kept house, and set before us a frugal repast; and we had free access to her brother's poems, the

*Lyrical Ballads*, which were still in manuscript, or in the form of *Sybilline Leaves*. I dipped into a few of these with great satisfaction, and with the faith of a novice. I slept that night in an old room with blue hangings, and covered with the round-faced family-portraits of the age of George I. and II. and from the wooded declivity of the adjoining park that overlooked my window, at the dawn of day, could

—— “hear the loud stag speak.”

In the outset of life (and particularly at this time I felt it so) our imagination has a body to it. We are in a state between sleeping and waking, and have indistinct but glorious glimpses of strange shapes, and there is always something to come better than what we see. As in our dreams the fullness of the blood gives warmth and reality to the coinage of the brain, so in youth our ideas are clothed, and fed, and pampered with our good spirits; we breathe thick with thoughtless happiness, the weight of future years presses on the strong pulses of the heart, and we repose with undisturbed faith in truth and good. As we advance, we exhaust our fund of enjoyment and of hope. We are no longer wrapped in *lamb's-wool*, lulled in Elysium. As we taste the pleasures of life, their spirit evaporates, the sense palls; and nothing is left but the phantoms, the lifeless shadows of what *has been*!

That morning, as soon as breakfast was over, we strolled out into the park, and seating ourselves on the trunk of an old ash-tree that stretched along the ground, Coleridge read aloud with a sonorous and musical voice, the ballad of *Betty Foy*. I was not critically or sceptically inclined. I saw touches of truth and nature, and took the rest for granted.

But in the *Thorn*, the *Mad Mother*, and the *Complaint of a Poor Indian Woman*, I felt that deeper power and pathos which have been since acknowledged,

“ In spite of pride, in erring reason’s spite,”

as the characteristics of this author; and the sense of a new style and a new spirit in poetry came over me. It had to me something of the effect that arises from the turning up of the fresh soil, or of the first welcome breath of Spring,

“ While yet the trembling year is unconfirmed.”

Coleridge and myself walked back to Stowey that evening, and his voice sounded high

“ Of Providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,  
Fix’d fate, free-will, foreknowledge absolute,”

as we passed through echoing grove, by fairy stream or waterfall, gleaming in the summer moonlight! He lamented that Wordsworth was not prone enough to belief in the traditional superstitions of the place, and that there was a something corporeal, a *matter-of-fact-ness*, a clinging to the palpable, or often to the petty, in his poetry, in consequence. His genius was not a spirit that descended to him through the air; it sprung out of the ground like a flower, or unfolded itself from a green spray, on which the gold-finch sang. He said, however (if I remember right) that this objection must be confined to his descriptive pieces, that his philosophic poetry had a grand and comprehensive spirit in it, so that his soul seemed to inhabit the universe like a palace, and to discover truth by intuition, rather than by deduction. The next day Wordsworth arrived from Bristol at Coleridge’s cottage. I think I see him now. He answered in some degree to his friend’s description of him, but was more gaunt

and Don Quixote-like. He was quaintly dressed (according to the *costume* of that unconstrained period) in a brown fustian jacket and striped pantaloons. There was something of a roll, a lounge in his gait, not unlike his own Peter Bell. There was a severe, worn pressure of thought about his temples, a fire in his eye (as if he saw something in objects more than the outward appearance) an intense high narrow forehead, a Roman nose, cheeks furrowed by strong purpose and feeling, and a convulsive inclination to laughter about the mouth, a good deal at variance with the solemn, stately expression of the rest of his face. Chantry's bust wants the marking traits; but he was teased into making it regular and heavy: Haydon's head of him, introduced into the *Entrance of Christ into Jerusalem*, is the most like his drooping weight of thought and expression. He sat down and talked very naturally and freely, with a mixture of clear gushing accents in his voice, a deep guttural intonation, and a strong tincture of the northern *burr*, like the crust on wine. He instantly began to make havoc of the half of a Cheshire cheese on the table, and said triumphantly that "his marriage with experience had not been so unproductive as Mr. Southey's in teaching him a knowledge of the good things of this life." He had been to see the *Castle Spectre* by Monk Lewis, while at Bristol, and described it very well. He said "it fitted the taste of the audience like a glove." This *ad captandum* merit was however by no means a recommendation of it, according to the severe principles of the new school, which reject rather than court popular effect. Wordsworth, looking out of the low, latticed window, said, "How beautifully the sun sets on that yellow bank!" I thought within myself, "With what eyes these poets see nature!" and ever after, when I saw the sun-set stream upon the objects facing it, conceived I had made a

discovery, or thanked Mr. Wordsworth for having made one for me! We went over to All-Foxden again the day following, and Wordsworth read us the story of Peter Bell in the open air; and the comment made upon it by his face and voice was very different from that of some later critics! Whatever might be thought of the poem, "his face was as a book where men might read strange matters," and he announced the fate of his hero in prophetic tones. There is a *chaunt* in the recitation both of Coleridge and Wordsworth, which acts as a spell upon the hearer, and disarms the judgment. Perhaps they have deceived themselves by making habitual use of this ambiguous accompaniment. Coleridge's manner is more full, animated, and varied; Wordsworth's more equable, sustained, and internal. The one might be termed more *dramatic*, the other more *lyrical*. Coleridge has told me that he himself liked to compose in walking over uneven ground, or breaking through the straggling branches of a copsewood; whereas Wordsworth always wrote (if he could) walking up and down a strait gravel-walk, or in some spot where the continuity of his verse met with no collateral interruption. Returning that same evening, I got into a metaphysical argument with Wordsworth, while Coleridge was explaining the different notes of the nightingale to his sister, in which we neither of us succeeded in making ourselves perfectly clear and intelligible. Thus I passed three weeks at Nether Stowey and in the neighbourhood, generally devoting the afternoons to a delightful chat in an arbour made of bark by the poet's friend Tom Poole, sitting under two fine elm-trees, and listening to the bees humming round us, while we quaffed our *flip*. It was agreed, among other things, that we should make a jaunt down the Bristol-Channel, as far as Linton. We set off together on foot, Coleridge, John Chester, and I. This Chester was a native of



Nether Stowey, one of those who were attracted to Coleridge's discourse as flies are to honey, or bees in swarming-time to the sound of a brass pan. He "followed in the chace, like a dog who hunts, not like one that made up the cry." He had on a brown cloth coat, boots, and corduroy breeches, was low in stature, bow-legged, had a drag in his walk like a drover, which he assisted by a hazel switch, and kept on a sort of trot by the side of Coleridge, like a running footman by a state coach, that he might not lose a syllable or sound, that fell from Coleridge's lips. He told me his private opinion, that Coleridge was a wonderful man. He scarcely opened his lips, much less offered an opinion the whole way: yet of the three, had I to chuse during that journey, I would be John Chester. He afterwards followed Coleridge into Germany, where the Kantian philosophers were puzzled how to bring him under any of their categories. When he sat down at table with his idol, John's felicity was complete; Sir Walter Scott's, or Mr. Blackwood's, when they sat down at the same table with the King, was not more so. We passed Dunster on our right, a small town between the brow of a hill and the sea. I remember eying it wistfully as it lay below us: contrasted with the woody scene around, it looked as clear, as pure, as *embrowned* and ideal as any landscape I have seen since, of Gaspar Poussin's or Domenichino's. We had a long day's march—(our feet kept time to the echoes of Coleridge's tongue)—through Minehead and by the Blue Anchor, and on to Linton, which we did not reach till near midnight, and where we had some difficulty in making a lodgment. We however knocked the people of the house up at last, and we were repaid for our apprehensions and fatigue by some excellent rashers of fried bacon and eggs. The view in coming along had been splendid. We walked for miles and miles on dark brown heaths

overlooking the channel, with the Welsh hills beyond, and at times descended into little sheltered valleys close by the sea-side, with a smuggler's face scowling by us, and then had to ascend conical hills with a path winding up through a coppice to a barren top, like a monk's shaven crown, from one of which I pointed out to Coleridge's notice the bare masts of a vessel on the very edge of the horizon and within the red-orbed disk of the setting sun, like his own spectre-ship in the *Ancient Mariner*. At Linton the character of the sea-coast becomes more marked and rugged. There is a place called the *Valley of Rocks* (I suspect this was only the poetical name for it) bedded among precipices overhanging the sea, with rocky caverns beneath, into which the waves dash, and where the sea-gull for ever wheels its screaming flight. On the tops of these are huge stones thrown transverse, as if an earthquake had tossed them there, and behind these is a fretwork of perpendicular rocks, something like the *Giant's Causeway*. A thunder-storm came on while we were at the inn, and Coleridge was running out bareheaded to enjoy the commotion of the elements in the *Valley of Rocks*, but as if in spite, the clouds only muttered a few angry sounds, and let fall a few refreshing drops. Coleridge told me that he and Wordsworth were to have made this place the scene of a prose-tale, which was to have been in the manner of, but far superior to, the *Death of Abel*, but they had relinquished the design. In the morning of the second day, we breakfasted luxuriously in an old-fashioned parlour, on tea, toast, eggs, and honey, in the very sight of the bee-hives from which it had been taken, and a garden full of thyme and wild flowers that had produced it. On this occasion Coleridge spoke of Virgil's Georgics, but not well. I do not think he had much feeling for the classical or elegant. It was in this room that we found a little worn-out copy of the *Seasons*, lying in a

window-seat, on which Coleridge exclaimed, "*That is true fame!*" He said Thomson was a great poet, rather than a good one; his style was as meretricious as his thoughts were natural. He spoke of Cowper as the best modern poet. He said the *Lyrical Ballads* were an experiment about to be tried by him and Wordsworth, to see how far the public taste would endure poetry written in a more natural and simple style than had hitherto been attempted; totally discarding the artifices of poetical diction, and making use only of such words as had probably been common in the most ordinary language since the days of Henry II. Some comparison was introduced between Shakespear and Milton. He said "he hardly knew which to prefer. Shakespear seemed to him a mere stripling in the art; he was as tall and as strong, with infinitely more activity than Milton, but he never appeared to have come to man's estate; or if he had, he would not have been a man, but a monster." He spoke with contempt of Gray, and with intolerance of Pope. He did not like the versification of the latter. He observed that "the ears of these couplet-writers might be charged with having short memories, that could not retain the harmony of whole passages." He thought little of Junius as a writer; he had a dislike of Dr. Johnson; and a much higher opinion of Burke as an orator and politician, than of Fox or Pitt. He however thought him very inferior in richness of style and imagery to some of our elder prose-writers, particularly Jeremy Taylor. He liked Richardson, but not Fielding; nor could I get him to enter into the merits of *Caleb Williams*.\* In short, he was profound and discriminating with

He had no idea of pictures, of Claude or Raphael, and at this time I had little as he. He sometimes gives a striking account at present of the Cartoons at Pisa, by Buffamalgo and others; of one in particular, where Death is seen in the air brandishing his scythe, and the great and mighty of the earth

respect to those authors whom he liked, and where he gave his judgment fair play; capricious, perverse, and prejudiced in his antipathies and distastes. We loitered on the "ribbed sea-sands," in such talk as this, a whole morning, and I recollect met with a curious sea-weed, of which John Chester told us the country name! A fisherman gave Coleridge an account of a boy that had been drowned the day before, and that they had tried to save him at the risk of their own lives. He said "he did not know how it was that they ventured, but, Sir, we have a *nature* towards one another." This expression, Coleridge remarked to me, was a fine illustration of that theory of disinterestedness which I (in common with Butler) had adopted. I broached to him an argument of mine to prove that *likeness* was not mere association of ideas. I said that the mark in the sand put one in mind of a man's foot, not because it was part of a former impression of a man's foot (for it was quite new) but because it was like the shape of a man's foot. He assented to the justness of this distinction (which I have explained at length elsewhere, for the benefit of the curious) and John Chester listened; not from any interest in the subject, but because he was astonished that I should be able to suggest any thing to Coleridge that he did not already know. We returned on the third morning, and Coleridge remarked the silent cottage-smoke curling up the valleys where, a few evenings before, we had seen the lights gleaming through the dark.

In a day or two after we arrived at Stowey, we set out, I on my return home, and he for Germany. It was a Sunday morning, and he was to preach that day for Dr. Toulmin of Taunton. ~~I asked him if he had prepared any thing for the~~

shudder at his approach, while the beggars and the wretched kneeled to him as their deliverer. He would of course understand so broad and, ~~fine~~ a moral as this at any time.

occasion? He said he had not even thought of the text, but should as soon as we parted. I did not go to hear him,—this was a fault,—but we met in the evening at Bridgewater. The next day we had a long day's walk to Bristol, and sat down, I recollect, by a well-side on the road, to cool ourselves and satisfy our thirst, when Coleridge repeated to me some descriptive lines from his tragedy of Remorse; which I must say became his mouth and that occasion better than they, some years after, did Mr. Elliston's and the Drury-lane boards,—

“Oh memory! shield me from the world's poor strife,  
And give those scenes thine everlasting life.”

I saw no more of him for a year or two, during which period he had been wandering in the Hartz Forest in Germany; and his return was cometary, meteorous, unlike his setting out. It was not till some time after that I knew his friends Lamb and Southey. The last always appears to me (as I first saw him) with a common-place book under his arm, and the first with a *bon-mot* in his mouth. It was at Godwin's that I met him with Holcroft and Coleridge, where they were disputing fiercely which was the best—*Man as he was, or man as he is to be*. “Give me,” says Lamb, “man as he is *not* to be.” This saying was the beginning of a friendship between us, which I believe still continues.—Enough of this for the present.

“But there is matter for another rhyme,  
And I to this may add a second tale.”

. W. H.

## LETTERS FROM ABROAD.

### LETTER III.—ITALY.

MY DEAR N.

I WRITE you, as you request, a very long letter, “on the largest sized paper, and in the smallest hand-writing.” You call the request a modest one, and I cannot but allow it has some pretensions to bashfulness, not only inasmuch as it comes in the corner of another, but because it is—let me see—just twenty lines long. However, you see what I think your twenty lines worth: and you are so accustomed, in matters of intercourse, to have the part of obliger to yourself, that it would be indecent to haggle with you about the tare and tret of an epistle. If you send me forty lines, I suppose I must write you a quarto.

You ask me to tell you a world of things about Italian composers, singers, &c. Alas! my dear N., I may truly say to you, that for music you must “look at home;” at least as far as my own experience goes. Even the biographies which you speak of, are, I fear, not to be found in any great quantity; but I will do my best to get them together. Both Pisa and Genoa have little pretensions either to music or books. We ought to be at Rome for one, and Milan for the other. Florence perhaps has a reasonable quantity of both, besides being rich in its Gallery: but I will tell you

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one thing, which, albeit you are of Italian origin, will mortify you to hear; viz. that Mozart is nothing in Italy, and Rossini every thing. Nobody even says any thing of Mozart, since *Figaro*. (tell it not in Gothland!) *was hissed at Florence*. His name appears to be suppressed by agreement; while Rossini is talked of, written of, copied, sung, hummed, whistled, and demi-semi-quavered from morning to night. If there is a portrait in a shop-window, it is Rossini's. If you hear a song in the street, it is Rossini's. If you go to a music-shop to have something copied,—“An air of Rossini's?” Mayer, I believe, is the only German who takes the turn with him at the Opera here; but Mozart, be assured, never. I believe they would shut their ears at a burst of his harmony, as your friends the Chinese did at Lord Macartney's band.

I suspect, however, that there are more reasons than one for this extraordinary piece of intolerance, and not altogether so unhandsome as they appear at first sight. As to theatres, I need not tell you the dislike which singers have to compositions that afford them no excuse for running riot in their own quavers and cadences. They hate to be

“Married to immortal verse.”

They prefer a good, flimsy, dying sort of a “do-me-no-harm, good-man,” whom they can twist about and desert as they please. This is common to theatres every where. But in Italy, besides a natural prejudice in favour of their own composers, there has always been another, you know, against that richness of accompaniment, with which the Germans follow up their vocal music, turning every air, as it were, into a triumphal procession. They think that if a melody is full of nature and passion, it should be oftener suffered to

make out its own merit, and triumph by its own sufficing beauty; like Adam in the poem, when he walked forth to meet the angel,—

Without more train  
Accompanied than with his own complete  
Perfections :

or Eve afterwards, when she received him,—

Undeck'd, save with herself; more lovely fair  
Than wood-nymph, or the fairest goddess feign'd  
Of three that in Mount Ida naked strove.  
— — — — — No veil  
She needed, virtue-proof: no thought infirm  
Alter'd her check.

(What poetry is there! what sentiment! what delicacy! what words full of meaning!) You know what I think on this subject, when the composer is a truly great one like Paesiello: and I know what you think too, when the air is one of his divinest, like *Il Mio Ben* in the opera of *Nina*. But Rossini is not Paesiello? True. He gives us a delightful air now and then; but in the hurry of his industry and his animal spirits, pours forth a torrent of common-places. His is not a flow of music,—

“ Whose stream is amber, and whose gravel gold.”

It is, for the most part, common water, brisk in its course, and bringing down only grains of gold, however worth sifting. Nevertheless, he *has* animal spirits,—he runs merrily; his stream is for the most part native; and the Italians are as willing to be made merry with “ thin potations ” as with old hock. I meant to shew you how it was that they were prepared to undervalue Mozart; and I think I can now explain to you, in one word, how it is that they contrive to render themselves deaf to the rest of his merits, and to the



inspiration which he himself drank at an Italian source. Mozart was a *German*. I do not mean simply that he was a German in music; but he was a German by birth. The Germans in Italy, the lords over Italian freedom and the Italian soil, trumpet his superiority over Italian composers; and however right they may be, at all events, with regard to modern ones, this is enough to make the Italians hate him. It mortifies them the more, because they know that he is an exception to the general dulness of their conquerors; and not even the non-chalance of his own conduct towards kings and composers (which was truly edifying \*) could reconcile

\* Even when this great musician was a child, he felt the superiority of genius over rank. If his flatterers, however high their station, exhibited no real feeling for the art, he played nothing but trifling pieces for their amusement, and was insensible even to their flattery. When called upon to display the astonishing prematurity of his powers before the Emperor Francis the First, he said to his Majesty, with a simplicity that must have been somewhat frightful at court, "Is not Mr. Wagenseil here? We must send for him; *he understands the thing.*" The Emperor sent for Wagenseil, who took his Majesty's place by the side of the performer. "Sir," said Mozart, "I am going to play one of your concertos; you must turn over the leaves for me." The Emperor Joseph the Second said to him once, speaking of his opera the *Enlèvement du Sérail*, "My dear Mozart, this is too fine for my ears: there are too many notes." "I beg your Majesty's pardon," replied Mozart, "there are just as many as are necessary."—See the "*Lives of Haydn and Mozart.*" The genius of Haydn was not of this self-sufficing and jacobinical turn. He was eminently loyal and orthodox,—the reason, no doubt, why the Quarterly Review mentions his parting with his wife, and "attaching himself to the society of Signora Borelli," with so much indifference, or rather a tone of approbation. "Flesh and blood," they say, "could no longer bear it." We have no sort of objection, for our parts, if this was the case; especially as his wife was "a prude and a devotee," who made him write masses for the monks; whereas Signora Borelli was a "lovely" woman, who sympathized in his pursuits till she died. But how the Quarterly Reviewers settle all this with their conventional consciences,

them to the misery of preferring *any thing* German to the least thing Italian.

The Genoese are not a musical specimen of the Italians; but the national talent seems lurking wherever you go. The most beggarly minstrel gets another to make out a harmony with him, on some sort of an instrument, if only a gourd with a string or two. Such at least appeared to me a strange-looking "wild-fowl" of a fiddle, which a man was strumming the other day,—or rather a gourd stuck upon a long fiddle of deal. Perhaps you know of such an instrument. I think I have seen something like it in pictures. They all sing out their words distinctly, some accompanying themselves all the while in the guitar style, others putting in a symphony now and then, even if it be nothing better than two notes always the same. There is one blind beggar who seems an enthusiast for Rossini. Imagine a sturdy-looking fellow in rags, laying his hot face against his fiddle, rolling his blind eyeballs against the sunshine, and vociferating with all the true open-mouth and syllabical particularity of the

we leave it to themselves to explain, and shall be glad to hear. As the singers say, we shall be "all attention." They are bound to cant in their most choral style, to make amends for this incautious and profane ebullition,—this *extra-cathedram* chaunt,—this whistle in church-time; as strange as if a Bishop, instead of the Athanasian creed, or rather the Seventh Commandment, were to strike up "In the merry month of May." (See an article on the *Lives* abovementioned, in the *Review* for October, 1817.)

The example of Mozart might be instructive to certain German men of talent, who do not blush to fall in with all the nonsense of the Allied Sovereigns. How delightful would it be, for instance, if M. Gentz, when about to write some legislation under his master's eye, were to say, "Is Mr. Bentham here? we must send for him: he understands the thing." Or if the Emperor should say to him, "My dear Gentz, this is too free for my notions: there are too many popular provisions,"—for M. Gentz to answer, "I beg your Majesty's pardon: there are just as many as are necessary."

Italians, a part of one of the duets of that lively master. His companion having his eye-sight and being therefore not so vivacious, sings his part with a sedate vigour; though even when the former is singing a solo, I have heard him throw in some unisons at intervals, as if his help were equally wanting to the blind man, vocal as well as corporal.

Among the novelties that impress a stranger in Italy, I have not before noticed the vivacity prevalent among all classes of people. The gesticulation is not French. It has an air of greater simplicity and sincerity, and has more to do with the eyes, and expression of countenance. But after being used to it, the English must look like a nation of scorners and prudés. When serious, the women will walk with a certain piquant stateliness, evidently the same which impressed the ancient as well as modern poets of Italy, Virgil in particular; but it has no haughtiness. You might imagine them walking up to a dance, or priestesses of Venus approaching a temple. When lively, their manner out of doors is that of our liveliest women within. If they make a quicker movement than usual, if they recognise a friend, for instance, or call out to somebody, or dispatch somebody with a message, they have all the life, simplicity, and unconsciousness of the happiest of our young women, who are at ease in their gardens or parks. I must add, that since I have known more of Genoa, I have found out that it possesses multitudes of handsome women; and what surprised me, many of them with beautiful northern complexions. But an English lady tells me, that for this latter discovery I am indebted to my short sight. This is probable. You know that I have often been in raptures at faces that have passed me in London, whose only faults were being very coarse and considerably bilious. But never mind. It is not desirable to have a Broodinghagian sight; and where the mouth is

sweet and the eyes intelligent, there is always the look of beauty with me. Now I have seen heaps of such faces in Genoa. The superiority of the women over the men is indeed remarkable, and is to be accounted for perhaps by the latter being wrapt and screwed up in money-getting. Yet it is just the reverse, I understand, at Naples; and the Neapolitans are accused of being as sharp at a bargain as any body. What is certain, however, from the testimonies of all I have met with, is, that in almost all parts of Italy, gentility of appearance is on the side of the females. The rarity of a gentlemanly look in the men is remarkable. The commonness of it among women of all classes, is equally so. Now the former was certainly not the case in old times, if we are to trust the portraits handed down to us; nor indeed could it easily have been believed, if left upon record. What is the cause then of this extraordinary degeneracy? Is it, after all, an honourable one to the Italians? Is it that the men, thinking of the moral and political situation of their country, and so long habituated to feel themselves degraded, acquire a certain instinctive carelessness and contempt of appearance; while the women, on the other hand, more taken up with their own affairs, with the consciousness of beauty, and the flattery which is more or less always paid them, have retained a greater portion of their self-possession and esteem? The alteration, whatever it is owing to, is of the worst kind. The want of gentility is not supplied; as it so often is with us, by a certain homely simplicity and manliness, quite as good in its way, and better, where the former does not include the better part of it. The appearance, to use a modern cant phrase, has a certain *raffishness* in it, like that of a suspicious-looking fellow in England, who lounges about with his hat on one side, and a flower in his mouth. Nor is it at all confined to men in trade, whether high or

low; though at the same time I must observe, that all men, high or low (with the exceptions, of course, that take place in every case) are notoriously given to pinching and saving, keeping their servants upon the lowest possible allowance, and eating as little as may be themselves, with the exception of their favourite *minestra*, of which I will speak presently, and which being a cheap as well as favourite dish, they gobble in a sufficient quantity to hinder their abstinence in other things from being regarded as the effect of temperance. In Pisa, the great good of life is a hot supper; but at Pisa and Genoa both, as in "the city" with us, if you overhear any thing said in the streets, it is generally about money. *Quattrini*, *soldi*, and *lire*, are discussing at every step. I do not know how the case may have been in Spain of late years. It is certainly better now. But a stranger, full of the Italian poets and romances, is surprised to find the southern sunshine overgrown with this vile scurf. One thinks sometimes that men would not know what to do with their time, if it were not for that succession of petty hopes and excitements, which constitutes the essence of trade. It looks like a good-humoured invention of nature to save the foolish part of mankind from getting tired to death with themselves. But we know, from a comparison of different times and nations, that this is not the case. The dancing African and the dozing Asiatic are equally sufficed with a hundredth part of it; and the greater activity of the European has, in times quite as active and a great deal more healthy and pleasurable, dispensed with at least half of it, devoting the rest of his hours to sports and society. Mammon has undoubtedly been the god of these later times; and philosophy will have a harder task in displacing him, than it has had in shaking the strong holds of his colleague, Superstition: for though men cannot serve "God and Mammon"

together (a truth which the Mammonites are always practically disputing, in the very teeth of their own alleged doctrines) they can serve Superstition fast enough. Selfishness is the soul of both, as money formed the inside of Dagon. I believe, for my part, that both the causes above-mentioned have had great effect in forming the character of the modern Italians; but I believe also that the greatest of all (and I need not hesitate to mention it to a man of Catholic stock, out of the pale of the Pope's dominion) is the extraordinary blight that has been thrown in the course of time over all the manlier part of the Italian character, by the notorious ill example, chicanery, worldliness, and petty feeling of all sorts, exhibited by the Court of Rome. I do not allude to the present Pope; and a Pope here and there is of course to be excepted. I believe the reigning Pontiff is a well-meaning, obstinate old gentleman enough, whom events have rendered a little romantic; a character which is nobleness itself compared with that of the majority of his brethren, or indeed with most characters. But the Italians, for centuries, have been accustomed to see the most respected persons among them, and a *sacred* Court, full of the pettiest and most selfish vices; and if they have instinctively lost their respect for the persons, they have still seen these persons the most flourishing among them, and have been taught by their example to make a distinction between belief and practice, that would startle the saving grace of the most impudent of Calvinists. From what I have seen myself (and I would not mention it if it had not been corroborated by others who have resided in Italy several years) there is a prevailing contempt of truth in this country, that would astonish even an oppressed Irishman. It forms an awful comment upon those dangers of *catechising* people into insincerity, which Mr. Bentham has pointed out in his Church-of-Englandism.

We are far enough, God knows, from this universality of evil yet. May such writers always be found to preserve us from it! See Mr. Shelley's admirable preface to the tragedy of the Cenci, where the religious nature of this profanation of truth is pointed out with equal acuteness and eloquence. I have heard instances of falsehood, not only among money-getters, but among "ladies and gentlemen" in ordinary, so extreme, so childish, and apparently so unconscious of wrong, that the very excess of it, however shocking in one respect, relieved one's feelings in another, and shewed how much might be done by proper institutions to exalt the character of a people naturally so ingenuous and so ductile. The great Italian virtues, under their present governments, are being catholic, not being "taken in" by others, and taking in every body else. Persons employed to do the least or the greatest jobs, will alike endeavour to cheat you through thick and thin. It is a perpetual warfare, in which you are at last obliged to fight in self-defence. If you pay any body what he asks you, it never enters into his imagination that you do it from any thing but folly. You are pronounced a *minchione* (a ninny) one of their greatest terms of reproach. On the other hand, if you battle well through your bargain, a perversion of the natural principle of self-defence leads to a feeling of real respect for you. A dispute may arise; the man may grin, stare, threaten, and pour out torrents of reasons and injured innocence, as they always do; but be firm, and he goes away equally angry and admiring. If you take them in, doubtless the admiration as well as the anger is still in proportion, like that of the gallant knights of old when they were beaten in single combat. An English lady told me an amusing story the other day, which will shew you the spirit of this matter at once. A friend of hers at Pisa was in the habit of dealing with a man, whose knaveries, as

usual, compelled her to keep a reasonable eye to her side of the bargain. She said to this man one day, "Ah, so-and-so, no doubt you think me a great *minchione*." The man, at this speech, put on a look of the sincerest deference and respect; and in a tone of deprecation, not at all intended, as you might suppose, for a grave joke, but for the most serious thing in the world, replied, "*Minchione! No! E gran furba lei.*"—"You a ninny! Oh no, Ma'am: you are a great thief!" This man was a Jew: but then what dealer in Italy is not? They say, that Jews cannot find a living in Genoa. I know of one, however, who both lives and gets fat. I asked him one day to direct me to some one who dealt in a particular article. He did so; adding, in an under tone, and clapping his finger at the same time against his nose, "He'll ask you such and such a sum for it; but take care you don't pay it though." The love of getting and saving pervades all classes of the community, the female part, however, I have no doubt, much less than the male. The love of ornament, as well as a more generous passion, interferes. The men seem to believe in nothing but the existence of power, and as they cannot attain to it in its grander shapes, do all they can to accumulate a bit of it in its meanest. The women retain a better and more redeeming faith; and yet every thing is done to spoil them. Cicisbeism (of which I will tell you more at another opportunity) is the consequence of a state of society, more nonsensical in fact than itself, though less startling to the present habits of the world; but it is managed in the worst possible manner; and, singularly enough, is almost as gross, more formal, and quite as hypocritical as what it displaces. It is a stupid system. The poorer the people, the less of course it takes place among them: but as the husband, in all cases, has the most to do for his family, and is the person least cared for, he is resolved to get what he can before marriage; and a



vile custom prevails among the poorest, by which no girl can get married, unless she brings a certain dowry. Unmarried females are also watched with exceeding strictness; and in order to obtain at once a husband and freedom, every nerve is strained to get this important dowry. Daughters scrape up and servants pilfer for it. If they were not obliged to ornament themselves, as a help towards their object, I do not know whether even the natural vanity of youth would not be sacrificed, and girls hang out rags as a proof of their hoard, instead of the "outward and visible sign" of crosses and ear-rings. Dress, however, disputes the palm with saving; and as a certain consciousness of their fine eyes and their natural graces survives every thing else among southern womankind, you have no conception of the high hand with which the humblest females carry it at a dance or an evening party. Hair dressed up, white gowns, satins, flowers, fans, and gold ornaments, all form a part of the glitter of the evening, amidst (I have no doubt) as great, and perhaps as graceful a profusion of compliments and love-making, as takes place in the most privileged ball-rooms. Yet it is twenty to one, that nine out of ten persons in the room have dirty stockings on, and shoes out at heel. Nobody thinks of saving up articles of that description; and they are too useful, and not shewy enough, to be cared for *en passant*. Therefore Italian girls may often enough be well compared to flowers; —with head and bodies all ornament, their feet are very likely in the earth; and thus they go nodding forth for sale, "growing, blowing, and all alive." A foolish English servant whom we brought out with us, fell into an absolute rage of jealousy at seeing my wife give a crown of flowers to a young Italian one, who was going to a dance. The latter, who is of the most respectable sort, and looks as lady-like as you please when dressed, received the flowers with gratitude,

though without surprise; but both of them were struck speechless, when, in addition to the crown, my wife gave her a pair of her own shoes and stockings. They were doubtless the triumph of the evening. Next day we heard accounts of the beautiful dancing,—of Signor F. the English valet opening the ball with the handsome chandler's-shop woman, &c. and our poor countrywoman was ready to expire.

As the miscellaneous poetry of Alfieri is little known in England, I will take this occasion of sending you the commencement of a satire of his on money-getting. I was going to translate the whole of it, but it turned off into allusions of too local a nature. He does not spare the English; though he would have found some distinction, I trust, between us and the Dutch, in this matter, could he have heard the shouts sent up the other day upon Change in honour of the Spanish patriots, and seen the willingness which nine tenths of us evince to open our purses in behalf of that glorious cause. May God speed it, and contrive to make *all* our rich men as much poorer, and our poor as much richer, as they ought to be! But I am forgetting my satire. The close of the extract, I think, presents a very ludicrous image.

E in te pur, d'ogni lucro Idolo ingordo  
 Nume di questo secolo borsale,  
 Un pocolin la penna mia qui lordo :

Ch'ovè oggi tanto, oltre il dover, prevale  
 Quest' acciecatò culto, onde ti bei,  
 Dritti' è, che ti saetti alcun mio strale.

Figlio di mezza libertade, il sei ;  
 Nè il niego io già ; ma in un mostrarti padre  
 Vo' di servaggio doppio e d'usi rei.

Ecco, ingombri ha di prepotenti squadre  
La magra Europa i mari tutti, e mille  
Terre farà di pianto e di sangue adre.

Sian belligere genti, o sian tranquille,  
Abbiano o no metalli, indaco, o pepe,  
Di selve sieno o abitor di ville,

Stuzzicar tutti densi, ovunque repe  
Quest' insetto tirannico Européo,  
Per impinguar le sua famelich' epe.

Stupidi e inguisti, noi sprezziam l'Ebreo,  
Che compra e vende, e vende e compra, e vende;  
Ma siam ben noi popol più vile e reo.

Che, non contenti a quanto il suol ci rende,  
Dell' altrui ladris ove il furar sia lieve,  
Facciam pel globo tutto a chi più prende.

Taccio del sangue American, cui bene  
L'atroce Ispano; e il vitto agl' Indi tolto  
Dall' Anglo, che il suo vitto agl' Indi devo.

Se in fasce orrende al nascer suo ravvolto  
Mostrar volessi il rio commercio, or fora  
Il mio sermone (e invan) prolisso molto.

Basta ben sol, che la sua infamia d'ora  
Per me si illustri, appalesando il come  
L'iniqua Europa sue laidezze indora.

Annichillate, impoverite, o dome,  
 Par lei le genti di remote spiagge,  
 'Di àlloro no, di Buccalà le chiome,

*Orniamle, &c. &c.*

YES, glutton of the land and sea,  
 This pury age's deity,  
 I'll dirt my pen awhile with thee.

For since this gloating in a purse,  
 Which blinds mankind, grows worse and worse,  
 'Tis fit I smite thee with a verse.

Half-freedom's child, I know thou art :  
 I'll prove thee father, ere we part,  
 Of two-fold slavery and no heart.

Lo, dry-drawn Europe sends her brood  
 Of traders out, like a new flood,  
 To sow the earth with tears and blood.

Whether a land's at war or peace,  
 Produces metals, tops, or teas,  
 Or lives in towns, or villages,

This vermin, mightiest thing alive,  
 Makes them all herd, and crowd, and drive,  
 To fatten up it's hungry hive.

Unjust and stupid, we despise  
 The Jew that buys, and sells, and buys,  
 As if we acted otherwise !

Nay, we are worse ; for not content,  
Like other thieves, with a home tent,  
We rob on every continent.

I pass the 'Americans that bled'  
For Spain's fierce thirst, and English bread,  
Torn from the Indians it should feed :

Were I to track through all his woes  
The monster to his swaddling clothes,  
Where I should end, God only knows.

Enough for me, if I can tear  
The mask off now, and show the care  
Hag Europe takes to be thought fair.

How should we crown her, having trod  
Whole nations down for this her god ?  
With laurel ? No,—with salted cod.

This species of dried fish being greatly in request in Catholic countries, the image becomes very ludicrous to an Italian. There is a propriety, and yet a beautiful want of propriety in it. Were Satirists to strike coins as well as verses, a head of Italy some centuries hence, with a crown of dried fish on it, would puzzle the antiquaries.

If Italy is famous at present for any two things, it is for cicisbeism and *minestra*. Wherever you find shops, you see baskets full of a yellow stuff, made up in long stripes like tape, and tied up in bundles. This is the main compound of *minestra*, or to use the Neapolitan term, your old acquaintance *macaroni*. I need not explain the nature of it to you ; but some of your fellow readers may chuse to be informed, that it is

nothing but common paste, made up into interminable pipes. Much of it is naturally of a yellowish colour, but the Genoese die it deeper with saffron. When made into a soup it is called *minestra*, and mixed sometimes with meat, sometimes with oil or butter, but always, if it is to be had, with grated cheese, and that cheese Parmesan. An Italian has no notion of eating any thing plain. If he cannot have his *minestra* and his oil, he is thrown out of all his calculations, physical and moral. He has a great abstract respect for fasting; but fights hard for an indulgence. The Genoese in particular, being but Canaanites or borderers in Italy, and accustomed to profane intercourse by their maritime situation, as well as to an heterodox appetite by their industry and sea-air, appear to be extremely restive on the subject of fasting. They make pathetic representations to the Archbishop respecting beef and pudding, and allege their health and their household economies. Fish is luckily dear. I have now before me a Genoese Gazette of the 8th February last, in which there is an extract from the circular of the Archbishop respecting the late Lent indulgences. He says, that "the Holiness of Our Lord" (for so the Pope is styled) "has seen with the greatest displeasure, that the ardent desire which he has always nourished" (an aukward word!) "of restoring the ancient rigour of Lent, is again rendered of no effect, by representations which he finds it impossible to resist." He therefore permits the inhabitants of the Archbishop's diocese to make "one meal a-day of eggs and white-meats (*latticini*) during Lent; and such of them as have really need of it, the use of flesh;" but he says, that this latter permission "leaves a heavy load on his conscience," and that he positively forbids the promiscuous use of flesh and fish. I must add, for my part, that I think the Pope has reason in this roasting of eggs. In all countries

the devil (to speak after the received theory of good and ill) seems to provide for a due diminution of health and happiness by something in the shape of meat and drink. The northern nations exasperate their bile with beer, the southern with oil, and all with butter and meat. I would swear, that Dante was a great eater of minestra. Poor Lord Castle-reagh (for you will readily believe, that in the abstract, and setting aside his Six Acts and other tyrannous doings, the Liberal can pity even him) had had his buttered toast, I see, served up for breakfast the day he killed himself; a very mock-heroic help, I allow, towards a political catastrophe; but not the less likely for that. If wars have been made, and balances of power overturned, by a quarrel about a pair of gloves, or a tap of the fan from a king's mistress, it is little to expedite the death of a minister by teasing his hypochondres with fried butter.

God bless you and all friends. If I write another word, my illegitimate signature will stare the postman in the face.

P.S. Nothing which has here been said upon the faults of the Italians, can of course prejudice those finer characters among them, who, by the very excess of the corruptions and foreign oppression they see on all sides, are daily excited more and more to a patriotic wish to get rid of them. You may rest satisfied, that the multitude of these characters is daily increasing. I have just lit upon a sonnet of Alfieri's, by which it appears that the Genoese in his time were as fast bound in the Styx of superstition as of money-getting. It is not so now at any rate:—the folds are neither so strong nor so numerous.—The first quatrain is a fine and true picture of the city.

## TO GENOA.

Nobil-città, che delle Liguri onde  
 Liede a specchio, in ~~sembiante~~ altera tanto,  
 E, torreggiando al ciel da curve sponde,  
 Fai scorno ai monti, onde hai da tergo ammantato;  
 A tue moli superbe, a cui seconde  
 Null' altre Italia d'innalzare ha il vanto,  
 Dqi cittadini tuoi chè non risponde  
 L'aspetto, il cor, l'alma, o l'ingegno alquanto?

L'oro sudato, che adunasti e aduni,  
 Puoi seppellir con minor costo in grotte  
 Ove ascondon se stessi *e i lor digiuni*.  
 Tue ricchezze non spese, eppur corrotte,  
 Fan d'ignoranza un denso velo agli uni;  
 Superstizion tien gli altri; a tutti è notte.

Proud city, that by the Ligurian sea  
 Sittest as at a mirror, lofty and fair;  
 And towering from thy curving banks in air,  
 Scornest the mountains that attend on thee;  
 Why, with such structures, to which Italy  
 Has nothing else, though glorious, to compare,  
 Hast thou not souls, with something like a share,  
 Of look, heart, spirit, and ingenuity?

Better to bury at once ('twould cost thee less)  
 Thy golden-sweating heaps, ~~Which~~ cramp'd from light,  
 They and their pinch'd fasts ply their old distress.  
 Thy rotting wealth, unspent, like a thick blight,  
 Clouds the close eyes of these:—dark hands oppress  
 With superstition those:—and all is night.





## MADAME D'HOUTETOT.

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HUMAN nature is in general fond of riddles. We delight to unravel a knotty point, and we study with the greatest pleasure those characters, whose ruling feeling we do not entirely comprehend. They oblige us to disentangle our ideas with delicate precision, and to make subtle differences, at once exercising our talents and our patience. It is for this reason, in a great measure, that so many books have been written about Rousseau. His sensibility, his genius, his pride, his alleged ingratitude and subsequent madness, have made him one of the most interesting personages of modern times: the misrepresentations of his enemies have given a spur to our researches: and we may safely assert that we know more of his character and actions than his contemporaries: just as we are better acquainted with the course of a river, looking down on it from a distant eminence, than sitting on its banks, listening to the murmur of its waters. From the character of Rousseau, our attention has been turned to that of his friends; we have become familiar with them also, and the merits of Diderot, Grimm, Madame d'Epinau, and Therese, have undergone a severe scrutiny, and their falsehood or truth have received their merited judgment.

Among these last, no one more excites our sympathy than Madame d'Houtetôt, the object of his passionate love and the cause of so many of his misfortunes. Madam d'Hou-

tetôt was a woman of talent, and of the gentlest and most affectionate disposition. But unpretending and unnoticed, we should probably never have heard of her existence but for the passionate remembrance of Rousseau. It is the attribute of genius to gift with immortality all the objects it deigns to hallow by its touch. The memory of the feelings of the heart, however amiable and prized, expires with that heart which was their shrine. But genius cannot die. The present moment passes with the sun that hastens to its repose in the deep; and oblivion, like night, descends upon its world of suffering, enjoyment, or thought, did not genius prolong it to an eternity. The wisest hand down to us the actions of the best. When the chain of such spirits is snapt we emphatically call those times the "Dark Ages:" we turn shuddering from a time when men acted, but were unable to record their acts, and we seek with fresh avidity those remains of our fellow creatures which are more lasting than regal mausoleums, and more akin to our nature than the very body, preserved in a thousand folds of the embalmer's cloth.

It is on Rousseau's account therefore that we feel curious concerning the character of Madame d'Houtetôt. But while satisfying that curiosity we become interested on her own account, and although she has left little behind her by which we may trace her life, yet we are touched and pleased, and finish by declaring her worthy for her own sake of that attention, which we at first bestowed on her for another's. Elizabeth-Sophie-Françoise de la Live de Bellegarde was the daughter of M. de Bellegarde, Farmer-General, and the father of M. d'Epinay. Madame d'Epinay and she were therefore sisters-in-law, and lived together under the same roof until the marriage of the latter. Mademoiselle de la Live was born in the year 1730; she was five years younger

than her sister-in-law; and from her earliest years was distinguished by her sensibility, her gaiety, and her talent. Loving every one, she was much beloved; and this extraordinary tenderness of disposition which characterised her infancy, continued to adorn her to the end of her life. She was married in the year 1747 to the Count d'Houtetôt. The preliminaries of this marriage are a curious specimen of the manners of the age. Madame d'Épinay describes Count d'Houtetôt as "a young nobleman without fortune; twenty-two years of age; a gamester by profession; as ugly as the devil, and of low rank in the army; in a word, ignorant, and apparently formed by nature to continue so." She says further, that when she first heard of the proposal she could not have restrained her laughter, had she not feared that the consequences of this ridiculous affair would render her sister-in-law unhappy. In addition to this, it is affirmed that at the moment of his marriage Count d'Houtetôt was passionately attached to another woman, to whom he was unable to unite himself.

Such circumstances offend and even disgust those who are accustomed to look upon any disposal of the person of woman, however legalized, as disgraceful, unless it be sanctioned by the feelings of the heart. The individual character of Sophie is the redeeming ore amidst this loam; her acknowledged excellence attaches us to her, and we desire to follow her through her path of life, to read a new page in the volume of human nature, and to see how this amiable and gifted creature conducted herself in circumstances the most unfavourable to the developement of the nobler virtues of our nature. The passions of Sophie were in repose; she therefore permitted herself to be disposed of according to the customs of her country, though her unsophisticated nature shuddered at the formation of a tie, intended to be the dearest link among

human beings, on this occasion degraded to little other than a tangible chain.

The proposal of marriage was made on the part of Count d'Houtetôt by M. de Rinvile, his distant relation. M. de Bellegarde declared that his first wish was to please his daughter, and agreed to meet the young Count the next day at a dinner given by M. de Rinvile, where the young people should be introduced to each other. The family of Bellegarde were present at this meeting, and found assembled at the house of M. de Rinvile, the Marquess and Marchioness d'Houtetôt, the young Count their son, and a whole host of relations. The Marchioness rose eagerly to receive them as they entered, and embraced them all with cordiality. The first introduction over, she took the young Sophie aside, talked to her, complimented her, and was struck with sudden admiration of her attractions and understanding. At table the young people were placed near each other, and the parents of the bridegroom seized upon M. de Bellegarde. They were determined to take the poor girl by storm; they employed every art to cajole her and her relations, and solicited an immediate *yes* or *no* to their proposition. Sophie blushed, and was praised, her father was caressed, and Madame d'Esclavelle (the mother of Madame d'Epinay) alone retarded the final decision. She turned to the lady of the house, saying: "It appears to me, Madam, that M. de Rinvile is too hasty in this affair. The particulars are not sufficiently arranged for our young friends to decide; and if, in expectation of an union, they should become mutually attached, and obstacles should afterwards arise"—"You are quite right," exclaimed M. de Rinvile, clapping his hands; "good counsel for ever! We had better first arrange the articles, and while we are thus engaged, the young people may converse and become better acquainted; that's the best

way! that's the best way!" Then taking the parents of the young Count by the hand, he led them to a corner near M. de Bellegarde and Madame d'Esclavelle, calling out to the younger part of the company: "Amuse yourselves, my dears; we are going to employ ourselves in finding means to render you both happy." The fortune of the young Count was then declared, and the old Countess d'Houtetôt, regarding the relations of Sophie with eager solicitude, cried: "I understand nothing of business; but I will give all I have to give, and above all, my diamonds:—my diamonds, Sir, which are very fine. I do not know their exact value; but I will give them all to my daughter-in-law, independent of my son."—"This, my good friend," said M. de Rinville to M. de Bellegarde, "is a very handsome present, and what is more, very handsomely bestowed. What say you to our propositions?" M. de Bellegarde declared himself satisfied, but still insisted on consulting the happiness of his daughter. He was interrupted by an eulogium on the young Count: his wife, it was declared, must be the most fortunate of women. M. de Bellegarde was overcome: he stated the dowry of his daughter, and M. de Rinville instantly demanded that the contract should be signed that evening, the first banns published on the following Sunday, dispensation for the rest procured, and the nuptials celebrated on Monday. The family of d'Houtetôt applauded this arrangement; the relations of Sophie hesitated, but the importunity of the officious M. de Rinville was triumphant. The families of both parties were assembled; all unknown one to the other, they looked on each other with distrust, while the reserve, suspicion, and anxiety, inspired by so sudden an event, gave them all an air of stupidity. The marriage-articles were read, the Marchioness presented Sophie with two cases of diamonds,

the contract was signed, the assembly went to supper, and the marriage was fixed for the following Monday.

During this short interval, rumours not very creditable to the family of d'Houtetôt reached the ears of M. d. Bellegarde; but it was too late; the fate of Sophie was decided. She was passive during the arrangement of the contract, but her spirits became agitated as the decisive moment approached. If she appeared thoughtless and gay in company, yet she wept in secret. It was on the eve of her marriage that she saw Rousseau for the first time. She shewed him the suite of rooms that had been prepared for her, and conversed with him for a long time with that fascinating ease that was natural to her. The next morning, when Madame d'Épinay assisted at her toilette, she was very sorrowful, and had been weeping bitterly. She was going to live among strangers, and to submit her future happiness to the guidance of a man whom she hardly knew by sight.

She married, and became one of that society which has been handed down to us as a model of all that we can know of elegant, refined, well-informed and amusing,—but over which, the strange mode in which their domestic ties were arranged casts an air of heartlessness and intrigue. The conduct of Madame d'Houtetôt was influenced by the opinions of those around her; but she was nevertheless unblemished by those cardinal defects; and every one of every party unites in celebrating the warmth of her heart and the almost childish ingenuousness of her nature. Her person and character have been so vividly described, that we feel as if we knew her; and that her form flitted before us as we depict it upon paper. She was not handsome. Her face was even plain; her forehead low, her nose large, her complexion yellow and deeply marked by the small-pox; but

this irregularity of feature was compensated by the vivacity and sweetness of her expression. Her person was remarkably elegant, her hands and arms fair, her feet small, and she danced with extreme grace. She was vivacious, absent even, frank, and unaffected; her wit was spontaneous and her imagination lively. Her soul was penetrated and made up of love. This unrestrained affectionateness of her disposition was indeed her characteristic. Given up to the enjoyment of the emotions of her heart, she never permitted her ill-wishers to have the satisfaction of exciting in any degree a mutual sentiment in her pure and angerless mind. Her intellect was richly adorned by every talent, but her natural modesty prevented her from making any display. Possessed of great poetical talent, she neither published nor permitted her friends to make copies of her verses: she probably shrunk from any competition of wit with St. Lambert, who was a *Poët de Compagnie*, and whose laboured and dull productions form a striking contrast with her simple and spirited effusions. Both Rousseau and St. Lambert have left descriptions of her character. The one by the latter is almost the only passage of interest in his superficial "Cathechisme Universelle." "She has devoted herself," he says, "from infancy to the pleasure of loving, and has enjoyed all the happiness which an affectionate nature can bestow. She is passionately attached to all who are amiable in her own family and among her friends; and the ingratitude and treachery with which her sentiments have been repaid, have not diminished the strength of her affections, but only forced her to change their object. She has never hated those whom she has ceased to love; and she desires more to be assured of the happiness of her friends than of their attachment to her. Gratitude, benevolence, and generosity, are her attributes; and now in the flower of womanhood, she preserves



all the artlessness and candour of a child. Her understanding is penetrating, just, and delicate; but she has abstained from all abstruse studies. She delights in the fine arts, and writes verses full of feeling and sweetness. She is, from her extreme goodness, often the dupe of the malice of others, but she shuts her eyes to all evil, and the native purity of her mind hinders her from understanding the petty meannesses of those around her."

It was doubtless to this fortunate blindness and her extreme vivacity that Madame d'Houtetôt owed the tranquillity and happiness she enjoyed; for otherwise her delicate tact would have been perpetually wounded by the sight of the vices and defects of her associates. She began however to suffer early from the bad character of her husband. Count d'Houtetôt proceeded legally against M. de Bellegarde for the dowry of his wife. We are unable to explain the circumstances; but Count d'Houtetôt was universally blamed, and M. de Bellegarde so much irritated that he refused to see him. Poor Sophie threw herself at the feet of her father, and entreated him not to confound her in the anger he felt against her husband. M. de Bellegarde was deeply hurt by the conduct of his son-in-law: he was moved by the dutiful affection of Sophie, but he was unable to distinguish in his own mind the different feelings with which he ought to have regarded her and her husband. He was cold and reserved. Madame d'Houtetôt was afflicted by this injustice; she was told that it was more of manner than of sentiment, but it must have estranged her from her paternal house, and it may have contributed not a little to the formation of her attachment for St. Lambert. During the first years of our entrance into life we still cling to our early affections; the name of a father is sacred, and the companion of our infancy and the chosen friend of our heart are regarded

with increased love. But at the same time, our heart, opened to a thousand new emotions, requires tenderness and warmth in return for the treasure of affection it so readily bestows. We may easily put ourselves in the situation of Sophie. The attentions of her husband were cold and heartless; his unworthy conduct destroyed the sensation of tender friendship which she at first felt for him; his parents, given up to dissipation, could not win her esteem. Her father was estranged from her: her sister-in-law, Madame d'Epinay, was engrossed by her own intrigues. Her heart overflowed with the necessity of loving; her joys were all centered in the exercise of her affections. She saw St. Lambert; she loved and was beloved. In the society to which she was confined, her passion was not considered criminal as long as she covered it with the veil of what was called decency. Her husband required no more; and thus, without blame, or the consciousness of a fault, Madame d'Houtetôt became the friend, the constant, passionately attached and faithful friend of her lover, from the moment her connexion with him began until death.

St. Lambert was a poor noble of Lorraine, and his pecuniary circumstances constrained him at one time to serve in a regiment of infantry. He was introduced into notice after the death of Madame du Chastelêt, as the successful rival of Voltaire in the favours of that lady. Soon after her death he appeared, for the first time, in Paris. He was received in all the best society, and became a partaker of the *petits soupers* of Mademoiselle Quinault, the French actress, who assembled at her house the leading characters among the French literati. During the life of King Stanislaus he divided his time between Paris and Lorraine, where he had the place of *Exempt* in the body-guard of the King of Poland; he afterwards sold his batôn and obtained a colonel's commis-

sion in the French service. During the first part of his Parisian career, Madame d'Epinay mentions him in strong terms of favour and admiration. She was pleased with his society, and describes him as possessing great talent, delicate taste, and poetical imagination. He took a principal part in the society to which he belonged, and, as a philosopher and poet, attracted the admiration of his associates. He has since published the result of his philosophical studies and the verses long dormant in his portfolio. The one is without originality or truth; the latter display neither imagination nor passion. But in society these things wear a different aspect; and the brilliancy of his conversation, and the vivacity of his delivery, stood in place of profundity or wit.

Madame d'Houtetôt became attached to St. Lambert with all the warmth of her affectionate heart; and her attachment to him compensated for the keen disappointment she must have felt from the conduct of her husband. His meanness, his avidity for money, his avarice, became every day more apparent, and the coarseness of his manners admitted of no disguise. She turned an indulgent eye on his faults; she did not reproach him with his want of integrity; she bore his caprices with equanimity, whenever her mind, ever blind to the evil side of human nature, permitted her to perceive it; her greatest revenge was a madrigal, where a perception of the ridiculous, and not satirical bitterness, made the point of her reproof. Her life under the roof of his parents was passed in a routine of pleasure, which at intervals was exchanged for the solitude of their country seat on the sea-side, in Normandy. She made one at the parties of Madame d'Epinay, and was one of the performers at her private theatre. She took a part in the "Engagement Temeraire," a comedy by Rousseau, who also had a part in it, and at that

time was often in the society of his afterwards beloved Sophie. They took long walks together, and conversation never flagged between them: he thought her very agreeable, but he was far from foreseeing that she was to become the destiny of his life, and the innocent cause of so many of his misfortunes. We may guess the reason why his heart was at that time less susceptible of passion. He lived in society, and his literary efforts were of a political and philosophical nature. Besides, at that time, just awakened to the consciousness of his powers, his mind was too full of its own identity and exertions, to expend itself upon sympathy with another. But during his romantic residence at the Hermitage, his solitary wanderings in the wood of Montmorenci, and his impassioned day-dreams, when he created Julie and St. Preux, his heart was awakened, and he was prepared for the reception of that love which he so eloquently described. In the mean time, years passed over the head of Madame d'Houtetôt; she continued gay, simple, and enthusiastic, forgetful of all except her constant and unalterable attachment towards her friends. To them she was a sympathizing companion during their joyous hours, an angel of consolation in their adversity; the sensibility that filled her heart gave a touching amiability to her manners, and her vivacity never wounded, because it was always animated by the truest spirit of delicacy.

St. Lambert was often absent during the campaigns. On occasion of one of these absences, she came to the Hermitage, where Rousseau then resided, to bring him news of his friend. Her journey thither was full of adventures. Her coachman lost his way, her carriage stuck in the mud, she alighted to walk, but her slight shoes were soon destroyed, and she arrived at the hermitage in boots, laughing heartily at her misfortune. Rousseau was delighted with her frank

and amiable demeanour; her stay was short, but they parted mutually pleased, and she promised to renew her visit.

She executed her promise the following year. M. d'Houtetôt and St. Lambert, who both served, were absent. Her husband had wished her to retire to their estate in Normandy, but her friends opposed themselves to so melancholy a separation; her ill health was a pretext, and she was permitted to rent a small house at Eaubonne, situated midway between the Hermitage and La Chevette, the seat of Madame d'Epinay. She came over from Eaubonne to the Hermitage on horseback, and in man's attire. Rousseau would not have been pleased with this disguise in another, but the natural grace of Madame d'Houtetôt embellished every action of her life; she even lent an air of romance to this visit, and the first emotions of the most passionate love were awakened in the heart of Rousseau. He was then occupied in the composition of "La Nouvelle Heloise," and his imagination was excited by his extatic reveries; he was in love without an object, and this love fascinated his sight. At first he saw his Julie in Madame d'Houtetôt; but soon Julie was forgotten, and this amiable woman endowed with all the perfections of the idol of his heart. Madame d'Houtetôt made him the confident of her affection for St. Lambert; she spoke of him with enthusiastic tenderness, and the contagion of passion was communicated to her unfortunate hearer. For a long time he was unaware of the feeling that had taken possession of him; he attributed his agitation and deep sympathy to the warmth of his friendship. It was not until he found, during his noon-day reveries, the idea of Madame d'Houtetôt substituted for Julie, that he opened his eyes, and saw the extent of his misfortune.

At first, shame and timidity rendered him silent: his agitation betrayed him, and Madame d'Houtetot found that

she was beloved. Her gentle nature would not permit her to be angry with a man whose fault was his attachment to her, and she hesitated to deprive St. Lambert of a friend whom he prized. She saw a middle course, and, unread in the human heart, she trusted that utter hopelessness would destroy the ill-placed love, while her sincere friendship would preserve the happiness of Rousseau. She talked to him of St. Lambert; she drew a lively picture of the delightful intercourse that might exist between all three, when he should have restrained his feelings within reasonable bounds; she exhorted him to put in exercise his virtuous principles, and she reproached him for his treason towards his friend. Rousseau listened with docility; and his own understanding added force to her arguments. There was one, however, that she did not use, but which speedily suggested itself to his mind, and which became a spur instead of a check to his passion. He thought of his age, and of the unalterable fidelity of Madame d'Houtetôt to her lover. What, he thought, can St. Lambert, the tenderly beloved St. Lambert, have to fear from me? Old, unattractive, sick, my folly can hurt myself alone, and I may love and weep, fearless of being guilty of any treachery towards my young and favoured friend.

Rousseau having thus silenced his remorse, he gave himself entirely up to his destructive passion. Madame d'Houtetôt never flattered his delusion, or ceased to remonstrate against it; but she treated him with gentleness, and falsely trusted that her friendship would suffice to content a sentiment, which ever requires entire sympathy and unconditional return. This misjudged kindness led them both to the brink of a precipice. They spent much of their time together; they took long walks in the romantic country they inhabited; they passed evenings together, under the shade

of trees in a small wood. Love made Rousseau eloquent, even beyond his natural talent, but the fidelity of Madame d'Houtetôt remained unshaken; she was moved to tears, but St. Lambert occupied solely the shrine of her heart; his idea was perpetually present to her; she recalled it to the memory of Rousseau, and he saw with despair the insurmountable bounds that she eternally placed to his vainly towering passion.

This state of things could not continue long; it could not have endured of itself, and it was broken in upon by the intervention of others. His love became known, and attracted universal attention; an anonymous letter awakened the suspicions of St. Lambert. He did justice to the constancy of Madame d'Houtetôt; but she had concealed the love of Rousseau from him, and this occasioned some diffidence in his mind. Angry with herself for her injudicious indulgence, and fearful of its consequences, Madame d'Houtetôt declared to Rousseau, that he must forget his unhappy passion, or he could see her no more. The suspicions which he conceived of Madame d'Epinay's interference, and the return of St. Lambert, brought on the catastrophe. St. Lambert reproached him with gentleness, and Rousseau was humiliated. On the departure of the Marquess, Madame d'Houtetôt was altered; she became cold and estranged, and even asked him to return her letters. Rousseau saw that the dream was over; he saw the necessity of exerting all his powers to extinguish his ill-fated passion. Madame d'Houtetôt was conscious that gentleness had been fuel to the fire that filled his heart: her visits to the Hermitage were relinquished; he was no longer received with the same cordiality at Eaubonne, and he ceased to visit there. Soon after St. Lambert was taken ill, Madame d'Houtetôt became

solely occupied by his welfare; she quitted Eaubonne, and all intimate connexion between her and Rousseau was at an end.\*

On his recovery, St. Lambert quitted the French service, and came to live at Paris. Madame d'Houtetôt, who endured much painful solicitude during his absences at the army, was doubly gay and contented on this change. St. Lambert gave himself entirely up to literature; he became a Member of the French Academy, was subsequently elected its Secretary, and afterwards succeeded Buffon as its Director. He published his "Saisons," a work he had long before composed and read to his friends, and on which his poetical reputation chiefly rested. The publication, however, destroyed the drawing-room poet; it was declared with one voice (a voice which all into whose hands it falls must echo) tame, dull, and unreadable; nor could the notes and tales by which it was accompanied give feathers to the leaden-footed Muse. Some time afterwards he published his *Catechisme*

\* As we are not writing either a justification or a life of Rousseau, we pass over the various contradictory accounts that have been published concerning his conduct in this affair, and the accusations that have been heaped upon him. His own statement by no means exculpates him, and the tone of sensuality that reigns throughout is in conformity to the style of "*La Nouvelle Héloïse*," but takes from his passion that purity and exaltation of sentiment which make the best part of our sympathy for a lover's sufferings. We confine ourselves in our present account to Madame d'Houtetôt, who held a clear course; she was divided between compassion for Rousseau and her constant attachment to St. Lambert. Her mistakes were owing to the tenderness of her heart; and to the end she demonstrated the sweetness of her disposition, tinctured, as was usual to her, by a little indiscretion of conduct and incongruity in her reasoning faculties. Nor have we entered here upon those extensive questions which might naturally be raised on such a subject. We are only drawing a portrait, and leave the criticism upon it to others.



Universelle; a book of false and superficial philosophy. The best parts are borrowed from Rousseau, but the sentiments, so eloquently expressed in the *Emile*, meet you despoiled and arid under the shape of St. Lambert's aphorisms and conclusive arguments. With his youth St. Lambert seems also to have lost the amiable and brilliant qualities that once distinguished him. Not so Madame d'Houtetôt; her mind seemed endowed with perpetual youth; age did not diminish either the gaiety of her spirits or the affectionateness of her disposition. She nursed St. Lambert in ill health; she humoured his foibles, and ever continued his constant and unequalled friend. The lady to whom M. d'Houtetôt had been attached died, and he transferred to his wife the attentions and friendship of which she had hitherto been bereaved. The fragments of poetry which remain of hers were chiefly written during old age; and amidst all its displeasures, she fondly dwells upon those affections which formed her only consolations.

It would have given us great pleasure if we could have traced Madame d'Houtetôt through the remaining years of her long life, but we know of no record that can aid us in this research. She was a witness of those tremendous vicissitudes that shock our moral world as an earthquake; she beheld the fall of what in her younger days must have appeared to her as firm set as the earth's foundations—the Bourbon dynasty. She saw the rise and fall of Napoleon. The last years of her life were spent at Eaubonne. Her husband and lover were both dead; all that before had lent life and interest to the Vale of Montmorenci had passed away. The Hermitage was gone, Rousseau was no more. She remained the sole land-mark of a strange country, which the waves of time had washed over even to obliteration. The hearts that had beat for her were cold, but hers was yet

warm. She was surrounded by her grandchildren, and sought consolation in new friendships for a fresh race. As she sat over her embroidery frame, she sang the songs she had composed in years long gone by, and composed others adapted to her present circumstances. Her imagination and feelings were vanquished by death alone.

She died in the year 1813, aged 83, and we lost in her the last relic of the age of Louis XV.



## SHAKESPEAR'S FOOLS.

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I WAS of half a dozen minds how to begin, till at last I fixed upon gravity. So here goes:—

“If a man were to introduce a Fool, to do nothing but speak folly, it were foolishness itself,” as was well said or sung by Mr. Coleridge (and he is a grave man) among other good things touching motley gentry, in an extempore lecture; for his pocket was picked of the written one in his way to the Institution. It was pleasant to see Kant’s philosophy, once in a way, hand-in-hand with Tom-foolery. Just then I heard there was extant a huge production on Shakespear’s Fools, by one Douce. A friend lent me the volumes, assuring me it was a “standard work,” and so were all the books in his library;—they were ever standard. With what joy I soiled my white handkerchief in flapping away the dust, how snugly they lay under my arm, and what care I promised to take of them! Ah, thought I, now I have a treasure!—What a disappointment! Why this man, Douce, had no more to do with Shakespear, than the housewife who sacrilegiously steals one of his pages to tie down a pickle-jar. The deuce was in Douce. . It was an antiquarian treatise on Fools’ dresses, grounded on authorities from Shakespear, all up-side-down. For instance, because one of them says, “I did impetticoat thy gratuity,” he gravely proves that Fools wore petticoats, blind to the staring fact that it was the sweetheart’s petticoat intended, and follows it up with

copies from monstrous old wood-cuts. Again, he affirms this particular Fool was not quite an idiot, and this one only half a natural, and so on, classing them as a gardener does cab-bages. Touchstone half a natural! Oh, Mr. Douce, what are you? That a man should knock his head against a wall is pardonable; but that he should obstinately keep it there, through two such big volumes, is by no means pardonable,—it is only astonishing.

It is said, in Shakespear's time Fools became less tolerable. Most likely. In his days there was an inquiring spirit abroad, which made truth insupportable; though once it was pretty sport to hear it spoken when no one else believed in it, as a beauty enjoys the joke of being called ugly; but when her charms begin to fade, it becomes a serious matter, a very intolerable piece of insolence.

Now to speak of them as individuals. It is a blank mistake to imagine, because they are all in motley, that their characters are of one colour. They are not like our harlequins in a Christmas pantomime, always the same identical harlequins, whether under the influence of a Mother Goose, a Friar Bacon, or a little silver fairy, jumping out of a full-blown tinsel rose. Even Douce could distinguish between them in his dousing way. Come forth, my merry gentles, all four of you (I wish there were a dozen) and let me take you by the hand, one by one, that I may introduce you in a particular manner to our friends and acquaintance.

- The lady Olivia's Fool shall be first,—not for his own merits, but purely in compliment to the lady. There is something suspicious about him. Would you believe it?—he hath a leman! yea, and absents himself from the house, we don't know how long, and will not confess where he has been. This is the more inexcusable, as there happens to be a touch of prudery among the good qualities of his noble

mistress. He is a wild young rogue, and ought not to be amended. Besides, I don't half dislike him on another score. I pass by his cutting a joke about hell "to ears polite," and his contending he "lives by the church;" the most orthodox have been guilty of the like. But what are we to think of him when he puts on the gown of Sir Topaz the curate? Soon as it is thrown over his shoulders, he speaks this pertinence—"I will dissemble myself in it; and I would I were the first that ever dissembled in such a gown." Then he pays a visit to a poor wretch in the clutches of his masters, with the text of "Peace in this prison!"—declaring he is "one of those gentle ones, that will use the devil himself with courtesy," and, at the same time, falls into most intolerant abuse. So, this is his idea of a Sir Topaz! After endeavouring to persuade the prisoner he is vexed by a fiend, is a lunatic, and that a dark room is a light one, he questions him as to the tenets of a particular kind of faith, which was once held most sacred. When this is answered, his catechism comes to that fearful point of "What think'st thou of his opinion?" "I think," says the prisoner, "nobly of the soul, and no way approve his opinion." This, considering it was impossible for him to believe, seems moderate. But his Reverence, who (you must all the while understand) is the Fool, immediately puts on the sullens, croaks out, "Fare thee well: remain thou still in darkness!"—insists on his giving credence to an incredible faith, and then, with another "Fare thee well," leaves him to his evil fate. If these mysteries are too sublime, gentlemen, for your understanding, it is pitiful. But as this Fool, who "wore not motley in his brain," did not choose to apply them to his times, I will even follow so wise an example. What's this, my boy? A tabor! Ah! I know thou art very fond of music, and hast "a sweet breath to sing," "a mellifluous voice," "a contagious breath,"—no

wonder thou hast a leman! Thou canst sing "a love-song, or a song of good life," or join in a catch that shall "rouse the night owl, and draw three souls out of one weaver," or chaunt a pathetic tender ditty, which

—— "is silly sooth,  
And dallies with the innocence of love,  
Like the old age."

But your epilogue-song, I hear, from good authority, is the most despairing thing your father ever wrote. With submission I think these five stanzas are not more despairing than the "Seven Ages;" though in a song, and with the original music, the bare history of man falls upon the heart with greater melancholy. I had always regarded it in no other light than as a hint to the audience, after having laughed, through a pleasant comedy, at the frailties and passions of their fellows, to look to themselves. At all events, I contend it does but "dally with the innocence" of despair.

Next, "good Mr. Lavatch," as thou art highly titled by the crest-fallen Parolles, step forth thou whose wit is like a "barber's chair." You may see, with half an eye, he has not the same jaunty air with the rest; though, when occasion serves, he can "make a leg, put off's cap, kiss his hand, and say nothing." His knowledge is somewhat limited; he has never been much beyond the walls of the Castle of Rousillon; yet when he visits the court he comes off with a passable grace. "My lord, that's gone, made himself much sport out of him;" and as every one must love the memory of the old count, this is the brightest feather in his cap. He too can sing, though he treats us with only one specimen, and that is the most appropriate to his situation, a fragment from the old Troubadours of Provence; albeit a little twisted—"corrupted," the countess calls it—to serve his own pur-

poses. He should be designated in the *Dramatis Personæ* as an uneasy bachelor. Benedick rails at love and marriage, but not at womankind, as they are to him quite an abstract species; but this Fool, having a mind to marry, especially "Isbel the woman," looks forward to his chance in the lottery with strange misgivings, and, in his fears, finds fault with all the sex together. A marrying man is often thus. Our experienced dames know how to translate this language of general abuse, and when they meet with a likely young man shockingly guilty of it, entertain high hopes, and are remarkably busy in thrusting daughters and nieces in his way. Hannah More has but sublimated the first part of the character of Mr. Lavatch in her "*Cœlebs in search of a Wife.*" Both give their special reasons for matrimony, only the Fool's are the more unanswerable, and both bewail the uncertainty of their approaching fate with sundry insinuations against the good qualities of all expecting maidens. The only difference is, that one sets out with a sweetheart in his eye, and the other sets his eye agog for a sweetheart. Cœlebs at last finds an angelic nonpareil; but as Shakespear had no acquaintance with such young ladies, he finishes his bachelor otherwise, and down falls the curtain without a wife for Mr. Lavatch. He had been to court, forsooth! and returns home with "no mind to Isbel. \*The brain," quoth he, "of my Cupid's knock'd out; and I begin to love, as an old man loves money, with no stomach." Upon this theme, a married man, with plenty of leisure and industry, might furnish a considerable folio; but that is none of my business; besides, Touchstone is growing impatient.

Here he comes, lugging in something after him. What, Audrey! I can't speak to thee now, Audrey. Go along, Audrey. "The Gods have not made thee poetical."—This fellow is the reverse of Mr. Lavatch; he has been brought up at court, and



then becomes fixed in a country life. He is a philosopher, but his humour is melancholy and satirical. It is not surprising that Jacques should take so strong a liking to him, as their minds are much of the same hue; only Touchstone is no misanthrope, because he had been no libertine. There never yet was satirist, who did not "rail on lady Fortune," and waste his time in reflections on its fleeting nature; however he does it "wisely and in good set terms." His education among courtiers, and his daily experience with shepherds, afford him everlasting subjects of discourse. Nothing escapes him, not Audrey herself; at every step he starts fresh game for his wit to shoot at; and is a mighty hunter in the forest of Arden. All base metals are tried and proved counterfeit by this Touchstone. Who will set our pious sermons and moral treatises on the sin of duelling against his "finding the quarrel on the seventh cause?" What ridicule he throws upon those nice distinctions which are to make a gentleman draw his sword and put it up again; and how he sneers at the masked poltroonery of these men of—(valour, I was about to say, but mine Host of the Garter reminds me of a better word)—of "mock-water." These rules for quarrelling still exist, much in the same fashion, among our pistol-mongers; and I am convinced it is because they cannot study Shakespear. Touchstone's satire flies more direct to its object than that of any other of the motley tribe, and is more caustic and personal. He is a walking Juvenal "under the shade of melancholy boughs." Though he gives us a scrap of a stanza, and can rhyme to "the right butter-woman's rate to market," he neither sings nor loves singing. From mere idleness he asks the Pages for a song, and then makes a most ungracious return. His having "no music in himself" is quite in character; and indeed I have read that the jaundice is often attended by a

partial loss of hearing. Audrey's admiration of him, and her being, I have no doubt, a comely, brown, black-eyed girl, may have effected somewhat; though I suspect the chief cause of his paying court to her, with no hurry to be married, was the want of a mental excitement in a pastoral life. I cannot love him so well as the others, but perhaps I love to read him more, as he, like Jacques, is "full of matter."

"Now, our joy, though last, not least," my dearest of all Fools, Lear's Fool! Ah, what a noble heart, a gentle and a loving one, lies hid beneath that party-coloured jerkin. Thou hast been cruelly treated. Regan and Goneril could but hang thee, while the unfeeling players did worse; for they tainted thy character, and at last thrust thee from the stage, as one unfit to appear in their worshipful company. Regardless of that warning voice, forbidding them to "speak more than is set down for them," they have put into thy mouth words so foreign to thy nature,\* that they might, with as much propriety, be given to Cardinal Wolsey. But let me take thee, without addition or diminution, from the hands of Shakespear, and then art thou one of his most perfect creations. Look at him! It may be your eyes see him not as mine do, but he appears to me of a light delicate

\* There are three passages, foisted in by the players, and adopted by the printers, which ought to be for ever expunged from the text. They are the following:—the couplet at the end of the first act; the whole of Merlin's prophecy during the storm, beginning with "This is a brave night," &c. as the Fool should go out with Lear; and those brutal words, "And I'll go to bed at noon," when the old king sinks into sleep. Such contradictions puzzled me for a long time, till looking among the Annotations, a profitable task once in a hundred times, I discovered that none of these three passages are in the quarto editions, printed eight years before Shakespear's death, but are introduced into the folio one, printed seven years after it. This, together with their absurdity, makes it plain they are not Shakespear's. . .

frame, every feature expressive of sensibility even to pain, with eyes lustrously intelligent, a mouth blandly beautiful, and withal a hectic flush upon his cheek. O, that I were a painter! O, that I could describe him as I knew him in my boyhood; when the Fool made me shed tears, while Lear did but terrify me!

“But where’s my Fool? I have not seen him these two days.

*Knight.* Since my young lady’s going into France, the Fool hath much pined away.

*Lear.* No more of that; I have noted it well.”

I have sometimes speculated on filling an octavo sheet on Shakespear’s admirable introduction of characters; but a little reflection showed me that I must write a volume, and that’s a fearful thing. This would rank among his best. We are prepared to see him with his mind full of the fatal “division of the kingdom,” and oppressed with “thick-coming fancies;” and when he appears before us, we are convinced of both, though not in an ordinary way. Those who have never read any thing but the French Theatre, or the English plays of the last century, would expect to see him upon the scene, wiping his eyes with his cloak; as if the worst of sorrows did not frequently vent themselves in jests; and that there are not beings who dare not trust their nature with a serious face when the soul is deeply struck. Besides, his profession compels him to raillery and a seeming jollity. The very excess of merriment is here an evidence of grief; and when he enters throwing his coxcomb at Kent, and instantly follows it up with allusions to the miserable rashness of Lear, we ought to understand him from that moment to the last. Throughout this scene his wit, however varied, still aims at the same point; and in spite of

threats, and regardless how his words may be construed by Goneril's creatures, with the eagerness of a filial love he prompts the old King to "resume the shape which he had cast off." "This is not altogether Fool, my Lord." But alas! it is too late. And when driven from the scene by Goneril, he turns upon her with an indignation that knows no fear of the "halter" for himself:—

"A fox when one has caught her,  
And such a daughter,  
Should sure to the slaughter,  
If my cap would buy a halter."

That such a character should be distorted by players, printers, and commentators! Observe every word he speaks; his meaning, one would imagine, could not be misinterpreted; and when he at length finds his covert reproaches can avail nothing, he changes his discourse to simple mirth, in order to distract the sorrows of his master. When Lear is in the storm, who is with him? None—not even Kent—

"None but the Fool; who labours to outjest  
His heart-struck injuries."

The tremendous agony of Lear's mind would be too painful, and even deficient in pathos, without this poor faithful servant at his side. It is he that touches our hearts with pity, while Lear fills the imagination to aching. "The explosions of his passion," as Mr. Lamb has written in an excellent criticism, "are terrible as a volcano; they are storms turning up and disclosing to the bottom that sea, his mind, with all its vast riches." Such a scene wanted relief, and Shakespear, we may rely upon it, gives us the best. But it is acted otherwise,—no. it is Tate that is acted. Let

them, if they choose, bring this tragedy on the stage; but, by all means, let us not be without the Fool. I can imagine an actor in this part, with despair in his face, and a tongue for ever struggling with a jest, that should thrill every bosom. What! banish him from the tragedy, when Lear says, "I have one part in my heart that's sorry yet for thee;" and when he so feelingly addresses him with "Come on, my boy: How dost, my boy? Art cold? I am cold myself." At that pitch of rage, "Off, off, you lendings! Come, unbutton here!" could we but see the Fool throw himself into his master's arms, to stay their fury, looking up in his countenance with eyes that would fain appear as if they wept not, and hear his pathetic entreaty, "Pr'ythee, nuncle, be contented!"—Pshaw! these players know nothing of their trade. While Gloster and Kent are planning to procure shelter for the King, whose wits at that time "begin to unsettle," he remains silent in grief; but afterwards, in the farm-house, we find him endeavouring to divert the progress of Lear's madness, as it becomes haunted by the visions of his daughters, and that in the most artful manner, by humouring the wanderings of his reason, and then striving to dazzle him with cheerfulness. At the last, we behold him, when all his efforts are proved unavailing, utterly dumb! "And my poor Fool is hanged!"

"With a hey, ho, the wind and the rain,  
For the rain it raineth every day."

Yes—there must be something very despairing in that epilogue-song, or it could not have entered my head at such a time.

I have said there are only four Fools in Shakespear, but we have the skull of a fifth. "Alas, poor Yorick!" And

this conjures to one's mind the idea of Hamlet in petticoats. Without this fact staring me in the face, I could have as soon thought of Juliet grown older than her old Nurse. But it is very true. Hamlet must have once been a squalling baby; and soon after, in little breeches, "with shining morning face." Nor could his infancy be better ennobled, than by telling us he kissed the King's Jester "I know not how oft," and was "borne on his back a thousand times."

CARLUCCIO.



## THE BOOK OF BEGINNINGS.

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*Ἀρχεῖτε, Μῶσαι φίλαι, ἀρχεῖτ' αἰιδας.*—THEOCRITUS.

*Begin, dear Muses, but begin.*

### I.

"Twenty sweet summers I will tie together,"  
Said the rejoicing bridegroom in the play,  
Who was to have one month of honied weather,  
And then, to please the tyrant, die next day. (1)  
The vile, hard-hearted——yet I don't know either—  
However, what I was about to say  
Was this,—that in these light poetic spinnings,  
I tie together twenty sweet beginnings.

### II.

Exordiums are my theme.—Thou great "O thou!"  
Whoe'er thou art, whom poets thou by thousands,  
Whether thou sit'st upon the Olympian brow  
Of epic bard, or wonderest at the cow's hands  
Of rude invoker, rhyming any how,  
Allow me to be clerk for both advowsons;  
For if my own rhyme's nothing of itself,  
It sings of others worthy of thy shelf.



## III.

I want, in fact, to finish a whole poem  
 At once ; and to write properly, I find  
 I can't have flow'rs as quickly as I sow 'em  
 Something will still take place, not to my mind,  
 Some weakness, lameness, some hard buddings (blow 'em !)  
 Some graftings, which I hate to leave behind :  
 So I must take my time with such grave matters,  
 And sow, meanwhile, my cresses in these tatters. (2)

## IV.

I must have light refreshment, relishes quick,  
 Fruits that I can dispatch with a brief eating,  
 And yet that I can eat too in the thick  
 Of trees and gardens ; sketches of one sitting,  
 But then of looks, at which a painter's stick  
 Might feel the life return to it, ev'n to beating.  
 When I want more, I go and wrap me round  
 In Milton's, Chaucer's, Spenser's holy ground.

## V.

I'm like a knight of old. I'm fierce to-day,  
 Desperate and grim, in middle of the fight ;  
 Nothing will serve me but to hack my way  
 At kings and chieftains, trampers of the right :  
 Anon, I'm gentle as a morn of May,  
 Am all for flow'rs, and loving dreams at night,  
 And must go waken blossoms in the bushes,  
 Warblings of birds, and worlds of rosy blushes.

## VI.

See,—the word “ May ” disturb’d my simile,  
 And took me with it, like a lass-led boy.  
 I meant to say, that as the knight would be  
 Now all for fighting, and the terrible joy  
 Of riding plumed battle like a sea,  
 And now would be rapt off, far from annoy,  
 Into the arms of fairies and their bowers,  
 So frown and smile my party-colour’d hours.

## VII.

So when my turn comes to repose, I read  
 My magic books, and then with a bird’s eye  
 Dart me far off, as he does to his bed,  
 Now to some piping vale of Arcady,  
 Now to some mountain-top, which I’ve heard said,  
 Holds the most ghastly breath in Tartary ;  
 And then I’m cradled ’twixt my Appenines,  
 Spying the blue sky through the yellow vines.

## VIII.

And then I’m all with Ovid and his changes,  
 Or all with Spenser and his woods, or all  
 With Ariosto and his endless ranges,  
 Riding his Hippogriff, till I grow too small  
 For eye to see :—then lo ! I’m by the Ganges,  
 Quick as that fatal wight, who gave a call  
 To Solomon to send him out o’ the way  
 Of Death, and met him there that very day. (3)

## IX.

And then again I'm playing fast and loose  
 With girls, in isles that stud the Grecian sea : (4)  
 And then I'm in old Greece, and Œdipus  
 Holding his blind eyes up, creeps quietly  
 By his dear daughter's side, whom I would chuse,  
 Were I a god, my worshipp'd wife to be : (5)  
 And then I'm in the valley, "wonder deep,"  
 Where the cold waters hull old Sleep to sleep. (6)

## X.

And then I'm all for Araby, my first love ;  
 I'm Giafar, I'm a "genie," I'm a jar ;  
 I'm Sindbad in some very horrid grove,—  
 Which is delicious : I'm the Calendar,  
 Who with the lady was *one* hand and glove ;  
 I am the prince, who shot his bow so far,  
 And found that cellar, with a stock divine  
 Of lips to kiss, still redder than the wine. (7)

## XI.

And then I take a pen, pluck'd from the wing  
 Of the rich hour, and let my fancy flow,  
 Dipping delighted in my ebony spring,  
 (For Sindbad would have call'd my ink-stand so) ;  
 And first of all (which you will think a thing  
 Not needing to be mention'd, but 'tis though,  
 For it's my subject; and I hold me in,  
 Not to have done too quickly) I begin !

## XII.

•Beginnings are high moments. I appeal  
 To you, musicians, when you're all prepar'd  
 To pour some storm of harmony you know well;  
 Painters, to you, when after studying hard,  
 You've got a subject, that you're sure you feel;  
 Readers, to you, when suddenly your regard  
 Is cast upon a packet, square, tight, brown,—  
 “ Ah, you mean books ? ”—I do,—the new from town.

## XIII.

“ Dinner on table ” after a long walk  
 Has it's exordium : so has going to sleep,—  
 Fading by fine degrees from a friend's talk :  
 Reaching a wood is not to be held cheap,  
 After a ride through sun, and dust, and chalk :  
 But the beginning the most sweet and deep,  
 The first of firsts,—ah, you know what it is,—  
 Is the first trembling, touching, trusting kiss.

## XIV.

I give up that. But not the breathing wood,  
 Enter'd, with hat off, after sun and dust;  
 Not going to sleep in smiling gratitude;  
 Nor meal that we approach, as walkers must;  
 Not cutting string from books; nor subject good,  
 Hit on by finger'd pencil; nor the gust  
 Of Philharmonic winds, waked all at once, (8)  
 Touch like a bard's pen, tilted for the nonce.

## XV.

Gravely I feel it, lightly though I say.  
 All bards have felt it, great as well as small,  
 And shew the proud delight with which they lay  
 Their hand to pen. Lo, listen first of all,  
 To Homer, opening his triumphant way!  
 What Horace says of modesty withal  
 And meek beginnings, must be read *cum grano*,  
 Or what becomes of arms *virumque cano*?

## XVI.

The opening, like the ending, must be settled  
 By nature and the occasion. Homer, treating  
 Of the wise wanderer, and how well he battled  
 Through his long ills by patient wit (and cheating),  
 As calmly brings him in; but when the high-mettled  
 And fierce Achilles is to give us greeting,  
 He strikes a trumpet up in his first line,  
 Fit for the coming of a wrath divine.

## XVII.

Beginnings please us, some for the mere style,  
 Some for the sentiment, and some for both.  
 All should be musical; and most, the while,  
 Seem full of a sure pleasure, nothing loth,  
 Whether their business be to mourn or smile,  
 Whether the Delphic voice be sweet or wroth:  
 For 'tis a task so noble, that of verse,  
 It aye must taste the pleasure it confers.

## XVIII.

Hesiod's Theogony commences well;  
 He puts the Muses first with such delight,  
 Their bathings, and their dances amiable,  
 And that delicious voice they send at night  
 Over the mountain-tops on which they dwell,  
 Like choral nuns, and take a hymning flight.  
 He heard them under Helicon, he says,  
 A shepherd; and they fill'd his hand with bays. (9)

## XIX.

E'en Burns's holly must submit to this,  
 True as it is, and blithe with berries red;  
 For Hesiod really pass'd those nights of his  
 Under the mountain with it's laurell'd head,  
 Where those fair birds were thought to live in bliss.  
 But fancies are facts too:—let that be said.  
 Besides, we've Fairy-land. The Muse, I grant her,  
 Kept house in Greece; but then we've Tam o' Shanter.

## XX.

Dante's first lines are simple, grave, sincere,  
 Too full of awe for shew (10):—Milton's the same.  
 Dryden's *Religio Laici* takes my ear  
 With an exordium, that should put to shame  
 All the monotonous lines we hold so dear,  
 Time-beaters for dull heads (11). Think not I blame  
 Nevertheless the glorious Rape o' the Lock,  
 The airiest wit that ever rais'd a joke. (12)

## XXI.

Pope was a true-born poet, modified  
By his infirm complexion and small sphere ;  
But then so great in that, that he could hide  
Scores of us dwarfs in our savannahs here :  
His rooms were not mere rooms, but worlds beside  
Of spirits, who hung pearls in every ear.  
Wit, lover, friend, his lays were like his lawns ;  
His face, as rich and sensitive as a fawn's. (13)

## XXII.

Yet what is fit for miniature, may not suit  
With oils, and lets more trifling copiers pass.  
But to return. The learn'd will think me a brute,  
But I must own, such is my taste, alas !  
For what is natural, and new to boot,  
That I could wish it proved (granting it was  
As foreign to his subject too as Pegu),  
That Virgil did begin with *Ille ego*.

## XXIII.

The bard was a dear lover of the woods,  
He loved their loving nymphs, he lov'd their dreams ;  
Glens and philosophy were his two great goods ;  
And when he thought of quitting his mild streams  
For seats of war and their ensanguin'd floods,  
It was as natural he should turn his beams  
Once more to look on what he left, as men,  
When the drum calls them, kiss their wives again. (14)

## XXIV.

Lucretius opens nobly with his hymn  
 To Venus, and her warm Dædalian sway:  
 You bask in it; nor wonder that Mars grim  
 Doats on her face in that devouring way. (15)  
 I like all poets, who thus seem to swim  
 Into their subject, proud of the sweet play:  
 The lordly swan, let out on his own river,  
 Feels not the dimpling with a sweeter shiver.

## XXV.

"Le donne, i cavalier, l'arme, gli amori, (16)  
 Le cortesie, l'audaci imprese, io canto,  
 Che furo al tempo che passaro i Mori  
 D'Africa il mare, e in Francia nocquer tanto,  
 Seguendo l'ire e i giovenil furore  
 D'Agramante lor re, che si diè vanto  
 Di vendicar la morte di Trojano  
 Sopra re Carlo, imperator Romano."

## XXVI.

"Ladies, and cavaliers, and loves, and arms,  
 And courtesies, and haughty deeds I sing,  
 What time the Moors of Africa in swarms  
 Came o'er the sea with Agramant their king,  
 And did such harm in France, and blew the alarms  
 He made in his young rage, vowing to bring  
 To fierce account, for his old father slain,  
 The illustrious Roman emperor, Charlemagne."



## XXVII.

So enters on his task, with gallant joy,  
 The Ferrarese, whose very name's a pleasure.  
 Nor scarcely less charms he, who chose to employ  
 His time in polishing another's treasure : (17)  
 He brings his wine, like the Idæan boy ;  
 Like pleasant friendship, comes he on our leisure ;  
 For our own sakes he comes, as well as his,  
 Touching a brilliant lute ;—and here he is :—

## XXVIII.

“ Leggiadri amanti, e donne innamorate,  
 Vaghe d'udir piacevol cose e nuove,  
 Benignamente, vi prego, ascoltate  
 La bella istoria, che'l mio canto muove ;  
 E udirete l'opre alte e lodate,  
 Le gloriose, egregie, inclite pruove,  
 Che fece il conte Orlando per amore,  
 Regnando in Francia Carlo imperadore.”

## XXIX.

“ Gallants in love, and ladies touch'd as they,  
 Who love to hear delightful things, and new,  
 Benignly lend your gentle ears, I pray,  
 To the high story I'm preluding to ;  
 And you shall hear the great, the glorious way,  
 In which a thousand wonders were gone through  
 By Count Orlando, for a loving glance,  
 What time the Emperor Charles was king in France.”

## XXX.

'Tis music truly,—'tis a myrtle tree,—  
 Incense lit up,—a bunch of heart's-ease roots :  
 Remember too, these rhymes of Italy  
 Once on a time were really sung to lutes :  
 Petrarch sung his : and such a taste had he,  
 Not only in voice, which warbled like a flute's,  
 Or rather was brimful of liquid power,  
 But his own airs were sung in every bower. (18)

## XXXI.

Our only lyrist, now-a-days, in the sense  
 Of Greece and Tuscany, is Thomas Moore :  
 But all should write, as under influence  
 Of modulated sounds and their full store ;  
 And then, and only then, they may commence  
 With their " O Thou's,"—" I sing's,"—and harps of yore ;  
 And this reminds me of that prelate merry,  
 Who has a name so militant, Forteguerri.

## XXXII.

" Emmi venuta certa fantasia, (19)  
 Che non posso cacciarmi da la testa,  
 Di scriver un istoria in poesia  
 Affatto ignota, o poco manifesta.  
 Non è figlia del Sol la Musa mia,  
 Nè ha cetra d'oro, o d'ebano contesta :  
 E rozza villanella, e si trastulla  
 Cantando a aria, conforme le frulla.

## XXXIII.

“ Ma con tutto che avezza a le battaglie,  
E beva acqua di rio, e mangi ghiande,  
Cantar vuole d'eroi e di battaglie,  
E d'amori e d'impresе memorande ;  
E se avverrà, che alcuna volta sbaglie,  
Piccolo fallo è in lei ogni error grande,  
Perchè non studiò mai ; e il suo soggiorno  
Or fu presso un abete, or presso un orno.

## XXXIV.

“ E intanto canterà d'armi e d'amori,  
Perchè in Arcadia nostra oggi son scesi  
Così sublimi e nobili pastori,  
Che son di tutte le scienze intesi :  
Vi son poeti, vi sono oratori  
Che passan quelli de gli altri paesi :  
Or ella, che fra loro usa è di stare  
Si è messo in testa di saper cantare.

## XXXV.

“ Ma, come voi vedrete, spesso spesso  
S'imbroghierà ne la geografia,  
Come formica in camminar sul gesso,  
O su la polve, o farina che sia ;  
O come quel pittor, ch' alto cipresso  
Nel bel turchino mare coloria,  
E le balene poi su gli erti monti ;  
Così forse saranno i suoi racconti.

## XXXVI.

“ Ma non per questo m'è patta' si dee,  
Nè farle lima lima, e vena vella :  
La semplicità non ha certe idee,  
Che fan l'istoria luminosa e bella ;  
Nè lesse mai in su le carte Achee,  
Ovver di Roma, o di nostra favella,  
Le cose belle che cantar' coloro,  
Ch' ebber mente divina e plettro d'oro.

## XXXVII.

“ Ma cantar per istar allegramente,  
E acciò che si rallegri ancor chi l'ode :  
Nè sa, nè bada a regole niente,  
Sprezzatrice di biasimo e di lode,  
Che tiraneggia cotanto la gente ;  
Che v'è infino chi l'ugna si rode,  
E il capo si stropiccia, e'l crin si strazia,  
Per trovar rime ch' abbian qualche grazia.

## XXXVIII.

“ Voi la vedrete ancor (tanto è ragazza)  
Or qua, or là, saltar, come un ranocchio ;  
Nè in ciò la biasmo, nè fa cosa pazza ;  
Che da gli omeri infin sotto il ginocchio  
La poesia ha penne onde svolazza ;  
E va più presto che in un batter d'occhio  
Or quinci, or quindi ; e così tiene attente  
L'orecchie di chi l'ode, e in un la mente.

## XXXIX.

“ Così veggiamo nel furor de l'armi,  
Tra il sangue, tra le stragi e le ruine,  
In un momento rivoltarsi i carmi  
Ai dolci amori; e quindi a le divine  
Cose, e parlar di templi e sagri marmi;  
Indi volare su l'onde marine,  
E raccontar le lagrime e il cordoglio  
D'Arianna lasciata in su lo scoglio.

## XL.

“ Ma già si è posta in man la sua zampogna,  
E canta sotto voce, e non si attenda.  
Non la guardate ancor, chè si vergogna,  
E come rosa il volto le diventa:  
Ma presto passa un poco di vergogna:  
Principiato che ell' ha, non si spaventa:  
E già incomincia: or noi, dov' ella siede,  
Taciti andiamo, ed in punta di piede.”

## XLI.

“ A certain freak has got into my head,  
Which I can't conquer for the life of me,  
Of taking up some history little read,  
Or known, and writing it in poetry.  
My Muse is no Sun's daughter, be it said;  
She has no harp of gold and ebony:  
She is a little clown, one of your singers  
Who sport it to the snapping of their fingers.

## XLII.

“ And yet for all she has been used to keep  
Within the woods, drinks water, and eats nuts,  
She’s fain to sing of arms and soldiership,  
And loves, and lofty cuttings of one’s throats :  
So that, if any time she makes a slip,  
You must not give her very savage cuts ;  
Because she never studied. Her degrees  
Have all been taken underneath the trees.

## XLIII.

“ But she must sing of warriors and amours,  
Because of late so many noble swains  
Have come down to this Arcady of-ours,  
Who’ve been through all the sciences and their reigns :  
There are your poets, there your orators,  
Not to be found on any other plains ! (20)  
Now she being used to hear them, the vain thing,  
Has got it in her head, she too can sing.

## XLIV.

“ But, as you’ll find, she will embroil herself  
Often and often with geography,  
Just like an ant poking about a shelf  
Midst plaister, dust, and bits of cookery ;  
Or as the painter did, who in a gulf  
Of fine blue water put a cypress-tree,  
And made his craggy mountains produce whales :  
Such, very probably, will be her tales.

## XLV.

" But you must not abuse her for all that,  
Nor keep on finding fault, and teasing her :  
The little simpleton was never pat  
At things that render histories fine and clear ;  
She never read Greek books, never look'd at  
Latin ones, nay, knows not one's own, poor dear!  
She never knew the fine things, new or old,  
Done by the mind divine and harp of gold.

## XLVI.

" All that she sings is for her own pure pleasure,  
Including, it is true, the hearer's too :  
She neither knows nor cares for rules and measure ;  
Deaf to the blames or praises, false or true,  
Which make such holes in other people's leisure,  
Making this bite his nails, and that look blue,  
And t'other claw his head and tear his hair,  
For rhymes that may look pretty here and there.

## XLVII.

" You'll find her also (she is such a romp)  
Leaping, like frog, about her on all sides ;  
And yet you mustn't set her down *non comp.*,  
For every Muse has feathers which she hides,  
Enabling her at will to frisk and jump ;  
And in the twinkling of an eye she glides,  
Now here, now there ; and so in occupation  
Holds all that witness her divine flirtation.

## XLVIII.

Thus we shall see, amidst the rage of arms,  
 Midst blood and slaughter and huge overthrow,  
 That in a wink she'll turn with all her charms  
 To love and joy, and then get up and go  
 To church, and talk of shrines and saints in swarms;  
 And then she'll whisk me to the sea-shore, lo!  
 And tell us of the tears and the sad shock  
 That Ariadne met with on the rock.

## XLIX.

But see,—her hand is placed upon her reed;  
 She preludes *sotto voce*,—she composes;—  
 Don't you look yet;—she'll blush,—she will indeed;  
 Her little cheeks will be all over roses;  
 'Tis but a touch of bashfulness, soon fled;  
 When once begun, there's nothing she refuses.  
 Now she begins;—there,—now then let us go  
 Near where she sits,—but softly,—on tip-toc."

## L.

The reason why I turn this toy so long,  
 Is, that I took it up but t'other day.  
 It spins, as it proceeds, too coarse a song;  
 But then refines, and makes a pretty play  
 Of giddy colours. You may think it wrong  
 To say, he came to scoff, but stayed to pray;  
 But the fact is, our laughter at romance  
 Grew fond of his wild partner in the dance.



## LI.

How could he help it, seeing that she had  
Through all her laughing ways so sweet an eye,  
Such stories for him, grace as well as glad,  
And unaffected tears, when grief went by ;  
A face, as Chaucer says, "sweet, glad, and sad ?"  
I'm none of those who take to misery  
To rouse a callous palate ; but the very  
Profoundest want of mirth's profoundly merry.

## LII.

Our lively prelate, living in a sphere  
Of hypocrites, and courtiers, and gay nothings,  
And having got perhaps he scarce knew where,  
Was much inclined to laugh at high and low things ;  
But being in his nature kind, sincere,  
And much a man, for all his lordly clothings,  
He grew in love with his romantic shelves,  
And only mock'd the hypocrites themselves.

## LIII.

Tyrannous ills, that patriots would pull down,  
Slaveries, and slaughters, inequalities  
Extreme and insolent, and of use to none,  
Cause tears indeed, that from all human eyes  
Brave hands should seek to wipe ; but if but one  
Huge, glaring, broad-eyed mirth laugh'd in our skies,  
Would dry up all kind things, tears, smiles, and flowers,  
And make our hearts as wither'd as our bowers.

## LIV.

Alas! I need not speak in the behalf  
 Of tears, the very best, I who have long  
 Seen what a cup the world consents to quaff,  
 Doing sweet smiles and sacred nature wrong :  
 'Tis Melancholy's laugh, and Mockery's laugh,  
 I speak of; and ev'n they utter a strong  
 And shuddering voice against the ills they clasp,  
 E'en while they kiss the beldams, and cry "Grasp!"

## LV.

But I digress ; so here I stop ; for *Finis*  
*Coronat opus*,—" a good end's a crown ;"  
 A maxim, that in my mind so divine is,  
 That heartily, and with " devocioun,  
 As Chaucer says, I wish that every Highness  
 And Majesty (but ours) may soon lie down,  
 And treat their realms with the sole coronations  
 That give a perfect finish to their stations.

## NOTES TO THE BOOK OF BEGINNINGS.

---

(1) "*Twenty sweet summers I will tie together.*"—Fletcher's *Wife for a Month*.—What divine plays would not Beaumont and Fletcher have left us, if they had not been "fine gentlemen about town" as well as poets, and ambitious to please a perishing generation. Their Muse is like an accomplished country beauty, of the most exquisite kind, seduced up to town, and made familiar with the most devilish parts of it, yet retaining through all her debauchery a sweet regret, and an adoring fondness for nature. She has lilies about her paint and patch-boxes, and loves them almost as much as when she was a child.

(2) *And sow, meanwhile, my cresses in these tatters.*—It is well known that this species of small salad will spring up in the course of a few hours in a piece of flannel.

(3) *Of Death, and met him there that very day.*—A fine story, illustrative of the great Eastern dogma of fatality, has been told somewhere by Voltaire. He says, that Solomon was one day walking out of doors with somebody, when the latter, with much consternation, said, "Who is this terrible figure approaching? He fills me with horror. Send me, I pray thee, to the remotest mountain of India." Solomon, in his quality of magician, sent him thither accordingly. The figure by this time had come up, and addressing the monarch, said, "Solomon, how came that person to be walking here? I was to have fetched him from the remotest mountain of India." "*Angel of Death,*" replied Solomon, "thou wilt find him there."

(4) *With girls in isles that stud the Grecian sea.*—An allusion to a modern Greek dance, supposed to have been handed down from antiquity, and to represent the story of Theseus and Ariadne in the Labyrinth.

(5) *Were I a god, my worshipp'd life to be.*—With the exception of the Philoctetes, I have but lately had the happiness to become acquainted with the divine dramas of Sophocles. I do not quote dramatic exordiums, because they speak the feelings of the author's characters, rather than his own; and my business is with a sort of personal consciousness of commencement: but the allusion in the text is to the beginning of the *Œdipus in Colonus*,—which see. Let no one imagine however he will find the least resemblance of Sophocles in a translator like Franklin, who, albeit he was an University Professor, could not write common English, much less translate some of the noblest poetry in the world. It is a pity that so many glorious works are lost to readers of taste, who do not happen to understand the ancient languages. Why does not Mr. Jones, the author of the Greek and English Grammar, oblige his countrymen with it's natural successor, a Greek and English Dictionary? Many might be allured to the study of a single language, who are deterred by the alarming necessity of understanding two, and by the comparatively frigid medium of Latin; for the Romans do not present themselves to the minds of people in general in the same glowing and poetical light as the Greeks; and this deduction from their history is a just one. Latin compared with Greek is a statue compared with a spirit.

(6) *Where the cold waters lull old Sleep to sleep.*—See Chaucer's *Dream*, beginning

I have great wonder, by this light,  
How I live!—

for there is another under the same title. The poem in question is full of the deepest imagination and sentiment. The beginning conveys some touching information respecting the poet himself; and

nothing can surpass the faculty of abstraction in the account of the Valley of Sleep, or the living presence of his portrait of a woman afterwards, perhaps the completest ever painted.

(7) *Of lips to kiss, still redder than the wine.*—"The Story of Prince Ahmed and the Fairy Pari Banou." The reader knows it, of course; but I write the words for the pleasure of repeating them.

(8) *Of Philharmonic winds waked all at once.*—Audi the Philharmonic Society; or if you cannot do that as soon as you wish, go to the Portuguese Ambassador's chapel in South-street, Grosvenor-square, and hear the organ there waked up by the hand of a master. I, to wit, one of the "Satanic School" (Oh Bob!) have stood in that chapel, under the influence of that organ, and with a tenderness for which an ill state of health must excuse me to my Scottish friends (whose ancestors called an instrument of that description "a grit box o' whistles") have felt the tears run down my cheeks at the crowd of thoughts that came upon me. "Aye," quoth the Laureat, "you were sorry that you had no longer a faith." Excuse me; I have a faith, though not in your damnatory one, or your verses: but I was struck to think of all the miseries and bloody wars that had accompanied the spread of the kindest of doctrines: and wondered how it was possible for men to look upon the altar-piece before me, and hear the music that melted towards it, and not find out, that to injure and damn one another to eternity, was unbecoming even the wrath of charity.

(9) *A shepherd; and they fill'd his hand with bays.*

Μουσῶν Ἑλικωνιάδων ἀρχαίμειθ' αἰδεῖν,  
 Ἄϊθ' Ἑλικωνος ἔχουσιν ὄρος μέγα τι ζαθεόντε,  
 Καὶ τε πρὸ κρήνην ἰοῖδεα πρὸς ἁπαλοῖσιν  
 ὄφρχενται, καὶ βύμον ἐρισθένης Κρονίουτος  
 Καὶ τε λείψαναι τερνὰ χροα Τύρμησσοιο,  
 Ἡ ἵππου κρήνη, ἡ Ὀλμειου ζαθεοιο,

Ἀκροτάτῳ Ἑλικῶνι χοροὺς ἐνεποιήσαντο  
 Καλοὺς, ἡμεροεντάς· ἐπερῶσαντο δὲ ποσσίν.  
 Ἐνθεν ἀπορνυμέναι, κεκαλυμμέναι περὶ πολλῷ,  
 Ἐννύχιαί τ' εἰσιν, περικαλλέα ὄσσαν ἰεῖσαι,  
 Ὑμνοῦσαι Δία τ' αἰγιοχόν, κ. τ. λ.

With it's own Muses be our strain begun,  
 Who hold the top of haunted Helicon,  
 Who make a choral altar of the mountain  
 To Jove, and dance about the dark-blue fountain.  
 With delicate feet they dance, first having been  
 With their sweet limbs inside of Hippocrene,  
 Or other sacred waters of the hill;  
 And then they mount its starriest pinnacle,  
 And weave the dance, the lovely, the desired,  
 Warming it more and more, because their souls are fired.  
 Thence, rapt away, and wrought up to delight,  
 Veil'd by the dark, they follow through the night,  
 Uttering a charming voice, and singing hymns  
 To Jove, who hangs a shadow on his limbs:  
 &c. &c.

There follows a list of deities, with the translation of which I have not time to please myself; nor can I add the Muse's visit to Hesiod, which succeeds. It is hardly necessary to observe, that the translations attempted in this article are only intended to furnish the English reader with some idea of the originals, in default of a better. Ricciardetto is a trifle; but exordiums like those of Hesiod, are to be approached with reverence.

(10) *Too full of awe for shew:—Milton's the same.*—I do not mean to say that both these exordiums are not very impressive, particularly Dante's;—but see the beginning of Note 5. The following is the commencement of the great saturnine Italian, who, except in the bitterness of his intolerance, was more a northern genius than a southern. The strong apprehension of the literal imagery in unison with the metaphorical, announces at once the hand of a great poet. The trunks of his trees are tangible and gigantic: and every thing

admirably expresses the fierce and gloomy doubts likely to fall upon a mind subject to violent passions, but capable of reflection.

Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita  
 Mi ritrovai per una selva oscura,  
 Che la diritta via era smarrita :  
 E quanto a dir qual'era è cosa dura,  
 Questa selva selvaggia ed aspra e forte,  
 Che nel pensier rinnuova la paura.  
 Tanto è amara, che poco è più morte.

" In the midway of this our mortal life  
 I found me in a gloomy wood, astray,  
 Gone from the path direct: and 'en to tell  
 It were no easy task, how savage wild  
 That forest, how robust and rough its growth,  
 Which to remember only, my dismay  
 Renews, in bitterness not far from death."

CARY.

(11) *Time-beaters for dull heads*.—This passage of noble and various music is as follows:—

Dim as the borrowed beams of Moon and stars  
 To lonely, weary, wandering travellers,  
 Is Reason to the soul:—and as on high,  
 Those rolling fires discover but the sky,  
 Not light us here; so Reason's glimmering ray  
 Was lent, not to assure our doubtful way,  
 But guide us upward to a better day. }  
 And as those nightly tapers disappear,  
 When day's bright lord ascends our hemisphere,  
 So pale grows Reason at Religion's sight,  
 So dies,—and so dissolves,—in supernatural light.

I never repeat this dignified strain of verse, without being at once soothed and elevated. Nor are my feelings without an echo to the sentiment, though by the word Reason I take leave to understand "common reasoning," and by Religion something very different from what is irrational. It is possible, perhaps, that the ear might have had a greater glut of satisfaction by a shifting of one of the pauses,

and the insertion of another couplet between the last two; but I do not know: and it might have hurt the earnestness of the thoughts, and so re-acted in an injurious manner upon itself. Dryden, after all, was only writing an epistolary style; but he could not deny himself the pleasure of this noble exordium. The first four lines are perfect; and how divinely, and like the image it presents to the mind, does the last couplet linger, and fade away! Spenser himself has not a more glorious Alexandrine.

It was hardly my intention to bring examples of commencement from poems so short as this of Dryden; but I could not resist the recollection of an old favourite. Dryden abounds in spirited exordiums, worthy of his conscious power of versification. The opening of Absalom and Achitophel is another instance, and that of the Hind and Panther a third. It is observable, that in the last, where he begins with a description of his spotless favourite the Hind, he adopts a smooth and lady-like versification like that of Pope;—but see how with one vigorous touch,—one fervid and unhalting union of one of his couplets with another,—he rescues his softness from monotony.

A milk-white hind, immortal and unchanged,  
Fed on the lawns, and in the forest rang'd;  
Without unspotted, innocent within,  
She feared no danger, for she knew no sin.  
Yet had she oft been cha'd with horns and hounds  
And Scythian shafts, and many winged wounds  
Aim'd at her heart; had oft been forc'd to fly,  
And doom'd to death, though fated not to die.

Dryden was the last English poet who studied versification, or in another word, *numbers*, which are the soul of it. The word itself has now become obsolete; at least it is never mentioned in connexion with modern poetry. Of Pope, I have no scruple to repeat, especially as the public are now used to the repetition from others, that he had a poor ear for the music of his art, as well as for all other music. But it was good enough to discover, and to be satisfied with, the softest and most obvious melodies in the poetry of Dryden and Wal-



ler; and, what is called his system of versification, was made up of nothing but their unvaried repetition. The ears of the multitude of readers are no better, especially in the North; and as they are not only satisfied with the versification when they read, but find it very easy to imitate when they write, their self-love has completed the delusion, and they cry up that as the finest system of verse, which by their own facility in copying it, they must feel to be no system at all. It may be asked,—why not be content with this sort of melody, or why not even think it the best, if it pleases the greatest number of people? I answer, first, that the greatest poets have not been satisfied with it themselves; secondly, that the object of the finest poetry is not to please the greatest multitude of readers, but the greatest number of readers who have wit and sensibility enough to be moved by it; and thirdly, that as this wit and sensibility may be extended, and rendered more common, by the very circumstance of the poet's not truckling to every thing which he finds established, so the general ear, like a particular one, may undoubtedly be rendered better or worse, according to the music to which the reigning poets accustom it.—Before any body however quotes the opinion here expressed of Pope, let him do me the justice to consult the two following Notes, 12 and 13. \*

Among other poets, who begin small compositions in a spirited and enjoying manner, I must not omit Theocritus and Chaucer.—There is scarcely an idyl of the former, which might not be adduced as an example; and though the construction of most of his pieces is dramatic, we have more right to identify a moral dramatist with his speakers, than any other, because his subject is generally of a more willing and ordinary nature, and turns upon pleasures common to every body's apprehension. How delightfully Theocritus opens his volume with that mention of the breathing pine-tree, the water, and the goat-herd's pipe!

Ἄδῃ τι το ψιθυρίσμα καὶ ἀπῖπτος, αἰπῶλε, τήνα  
 Ἄ ποτὶ ταῖς παλαιοῖς μελίσσεται· ἄδῃ δὲ καὶ τῷ  
 Εὐριπιδεῖ.

Goat-herd, the pine-tree, over the springs there,  
Has a delicious whisper in its hair;  
And you too play us a delicious air.

We imagine that the goat-herd has been playing something on his pipe,—that a silence of admiration has taken place, in which the pine-tree was heard over those fresh little splashes of water,—and that his friend the shepherd suddenly breaks out into that beautiful comparison. But I must apologize for this sorry translation. Theocritus makes the comparison completer by saying that the whisper, or ψιθυρισμα, of the pine-tree (what a charming word!) “sings something delicious,”—*αὐτὸ τι μελίσσεται*. I could willingly spend a whole morning in trying to turn the passage better; but I did not intend to write notes of such a length as have grown upon me; and though the excuse is a very bad one in general, the periodical nature of this publication really does not allow me time to linger upon them more than I do. Turning to Creech, who had a real genius for translation, if he could have been more patient with it, I find he has very properly retained the word in question:—

Goat-herd, that pine-tree's boughs, by yonder spring,  
In pleasing murmurs mix, and sweetly sing;  
And thou dost sweetly pipe.

But then we lose the happy indefinite air of the “something sweet;” —“murmurs” does not express the whispering sound of the original word; and “spring” is by no means the same thing as *springs*, in the plural, which suggest a variety of little waters leaping out of the ground together. Add, by the way, to this glimpse of Theocritus's scenery, the climate of Sicily, and perhaps the mountain in the distance, and what a picture for Claude or Gaspar Poussin!

I will take this opportunity of observing, that although the error with Creech was on the more promising side, he was as wrong in making Theocritus's shepherds talk so often like mere clowns, as more common-place translators have been in giving them the mere smoothness and conventional polish of Pope's *Pastorals*. The truth lies in a certain medium of strength and simplicity, leaning however to ele-

gance: for there is not such a difference between the languages of the various classes of society in the South as there is in the North, and most likely never was; the cause being of a nature as much physical as moral, namely, the more general diffusion of an equal quantity of enthusiasm and sensibility. All the senses of the South are critical. A Tuscan of the poorer orders trolls the pearls of his native language consciously over his tongue,—and addresses you on the most ordinary occasion with speeches that would be high-flown and affected in the mouth of an Englishman of the same class. The Sicilian dialect, I believe, though much less renowned, piques itself to this day upon a similar refinement, and is accounted a very sweet and happy one. I have read somewhere that there are modern pastorals in it of great beauty.

I have gone a great way from Chaucer, but it is always easy to return to him. His exquisite series of portraits, at the beginning of the *Canterbury Tales*, may be accounted a string of happy exordiums. But see also the *Dream* referred to in Note 6, the *Complaint of Mars and Venus*, the *Flower and the Leaf*, &c. never forgetting the exordium of the *Wife of Bath's Tale*, in which he jokes the friars so happily upon their succeeding to the ubiquitous privileges of the fairies. Readers of taste, who have suffered themselves to be dismayed by the imaginary difficulties of Chaucer's language, are astonished when they come to find how melodious, as well as easy to read; is this "rude old poet" as some have called him.—The syllables, it is to be observed, that form the plural terminations, are to be pronounced,—*motès*, *burghès*, &c. as they are to this day in many instances among the uneducated classes of the metropolis; and it is a pity we ever left off pronouncing them, our consonants being at all times too ready to crowd together and thrust out their softer neighbours, like fellows in a pit at the theatre. The final *e* also in many words must be humoured, as it still is in French poetry, the common ancestor of our own.

In olde dayes of the king Artoür,  
Of which that Bretons speke gret honèür,  
All was this lond ful filled of færie;

The elf-quene with her joly compaignie  
 Danced sat oft in many a grenè mede.  
 This was the old opinion as I rede;  
 I speke of many hundred yeres ago;  
 But now can no man see non elvès me;  
 For now the gretè charitee and prayeres  
 Of limitoures and other holy frees,—  
 That serchen every land and every streme,  
 As thikke as motès in the sunnè-beme,  
 Blessing hallès, chambres, kitchenès, and boures,  
 Citees and burghès, castles high and toures,  
 Thropès and bernès, shepènès and dairies,  
 This maketh that there ben no faèries;  
 For ther as wont to walken was an elf,  
*Ther walketh now the limitour himself,*  
 In undermelès\* and in morwèningès,  
 And sayth his matinès and his holy thinges,  
 As he goth in his limitationoun:  
 Women may now go safely up and down;  
 In every bush and under every tree,  
*There is non other incubus but he.*

(12) *The airiest wit that ever rais'd a joke.*—If ever the enamelled versification of Pope was proper for any poem throughout, it was for this lightest and most polished of satires, which in my opinion surpasses all other mock-heroics beyond all comparison. It has been said that Boileau has the advantage of Pope in *propriety*; that is to say, his characters always act in a manner suitable to real life, while Pope's wage imaginary battles in drawing-rooms, make addresses to the gods, &c. I am not sure that the objection is not more than specious; but the play between truth and fiction is one of the merits of poems of this description; and as the characters in Pope are taken from a more airy and fanciful class of life than those in Boileau, perhaps we may apply to them what a friend of mine once said to me about actors,—a remark, which I have good reason to remember, because it overturned, in two or three words, a certain reputation for criticism in stage matters, which I had been raising ever since I was

a youth. He observed, that it is not the business of actors to be natural, and nothing more: they should shew that they are masters of the literal truth, but add to it a certain spiritual colouring of their own, so as to unite ideal pleasure to the representation of reality, and make us admire their art without losing sight of nature. Now if we can suppose a certain dramatic consciousness in the personages of the Rape of the Lock, the prayers to the gods, the altar of "twelve vast French romances," &c. become matters of propriety as well as grace, the nature of comedy being duly considered; and unless we do suppose it, the battle in the last canto becomes a mere tragedy, and the metaphorical deaths by ladies' eyes, &c. real coroner's-inquest catastrophes, which the author certainly never intended. Be this as it may, the Rape of the Lock can afford to be something short of perfection; and I will here observe, that the only real advantage which the *Lutrin* appears to me to have over it, is in possessing a livelier exordium. The first paragraph of the Rape of the Lock is the only common-place passage in the poem. The author redeems it, to be sure, instantly; but still it is unworthy of what follows. The story of the *Lutrin* turns upon a dispute that happened between the Treasurer of a Chapter (whose station answers to our Dean) and the Chanter. An enormous Pulpit or Reading-desk stood in the way of the Chanter, and obscured his dignity. He had it removed. The Dean insisted on its being restored. Boileau sets out in high spirit, and a true mock-heroic vein:—

Je chante les combats, et ce prélat terrible,  
 Qui par ses longs travaux, et sa force invincible,  
 Dans une illustre église exerçant son grand cœur,  
 Fit placer, à la fin, un *Lutrin* dans le cœur.  
 C'est en vain que le Chantre, abusant d'un faux titre,  
 Deux fois l'en fit ôter par les mains du Chapitre.  
 Ce prélat, sur le banc de son rival altier,  
 Deux fois le rapportant, l'en couvrit tout entier.

Arms and the mighty-hearted dean I sing,  
 Who in a church divinely triumphing,  
 By his long toils and his resistless ire,

Got placed, at last, a Pulpit in the choir.  
 In vain the Chaunter, on a false pretence,  
 Twice got the Church to take the Pulpit thence;  
 The Dean, upon his lofty rival's place,  
 Twice took it back, and fixed, for ever, in his face.

I ought to have mentioned this exordium in the text; but an Englishman when thinking of poetry is so apt to forget the French, that it never occurred to me. I allude of course to poetry in it's more poetical sense. In it's other sense, as a sayer of lively and pithy things in verse, the French have all the abundance that was to be expected of a nation of their good sense and good humour. But as Terence was called Half-Menander, so Boileau is Half-Pope. He wants Ariel: he wants his invisible world: he wants that poetical part of poetry, which consists in bringing a remote and creative fancy to wait upon the more obvious wit and graces that lie about us. For as to the machines in the *Lutrin*, besides being too grave and heavy, they are not his own, nor rendered so by sufficient novelty of handling.

(13) *His face as rich and sensitive as a fawn's.*—This comparison must not be taken as a rhyme to fill up. It struck me forcibly when I was looking at a bust of Pope, that was exhibited in the British Institution. I think it is by Roubilliac. I never saw any thing that exhibited a nicer sensibility, a more delicate apprehensiveness. The nose seemed the very “tip of taste;” as if it were snuffing up the odour of his Banstead mutton, or the flowers he had gathered for Miss Blount. And when I recollected the fine dark eye in his painted portrait, the simile was complete. I have anticipated most of what I intended to say upon this stanza in the note preceding; but with respect to his style of composition, a word or two remains to be said, which has been suggested to me by a consideration of his person; especially as contrasted with that of Dryden. The physical conformation of a writer becomes a just ground of criticism and illustration, when there can be no suspicion of malignity. The portraits

of Dryden are those of a robust, or at least of a sufficiently able-bodied person, with a manly and breathing countenance. Pope's countenance is fine, and perhaps his eye has a more internal look with it; but it is unnecessary to inform the reader, that he had a person equally small and infirm, and that he could not even dress without assistance. I cannot help thinking that there is the same difference between Pope and Dryden in their verses, as in their persons. Pope goes to work cautiously, and with a certain minuteness of intention, like a miniature-painter preparing his ivory. Dryden takes up his brush with ease, and dashes at his oil-painting in a broader and more confident style. Pope, as if conscious of a complexional want of strength, takes all possible pains to do nothing amiss or incorrectly. Dryden trusts to the aspect of his strength for an effect, when he does not chuse to take the pains of proving it. As there is a vigour in his laxity, so there is a weakness in the very strength of the other. Pope seems to fear every stepping-stone in his way, and to resolve to get over the gutter handsomely, without detriment to his "little suit of black:"—Dryden puts forth a "manly leg," and steps across at once, certain that he shall go well over, whether with care or not. This kind of sympathy between mental and bodily conformation might afford some curious enquiries, and I think would be found to hold good throughout biography. Nothing however, which has been here said, can apply to the weak carelessness of many who might allege Dryden as an excuse, or to the smooth nothings of those who find their master in Pope. Both these great geniuses are always full of matter, and never write to fill up. Their poems are not plaster-walls, with an occasional look out. The whole edifice is enchanted work, instinct with life, and illuminated with fretting fires.

(14) *When the drum calls them, kiss their wives again.*

Ille ego qui quondam gracili modulatus avena  
 CARMEN, et egressus silvis, vicina coegi  
 Ut quamvis avido parerent arva colono,  
 Gratum opus agricolis; at nunc horrentia Martis  
 Arma virumque cano, &c.

I, who erewhile warbled in sybian shades,  
 And issued then to light, and fore'd the meads  
 To glut the exacting swain, who loved my song;  
 Yet now, a fierce note blowing, and a strong,  
 Arms and the man I sing—

I confess I have not only most of the commentators against me, Heyne included, but what is worse, Dryden himself, and that in a very peremptory manner. I must own also, that what he so finely observes respecting the ordinary commencement,—that “the author seems to sound a charge, and begins like the clangor of a trumpet,” is very true; and that, as I have hinted in the text, such an exordium is more directly to the purpose.

“Arma virumque cano, Trojæ qui primus ab oris.”

“Scarce a word,” says Dryden, “without an *r*, and the vowels, for the greater part, sonorous.” But still I must venture to refer to what I have said respecting the poet’s natural inclinations. Dryden himself thinks the Georgics his most perfect work; and with regard to the verbal objections which he and the commentators make to the passage in question, they might perhaps have been quite as ingenious and peremptory in defending the words, had the humour been upon them, especially the word *horrentia*, of which (including of course it’s root and derivatives) Virgil, I will be bold to say, was even fond, and not the less so for it’s being suggested by certain rural images, such as the bristling of corn, of reeds, &c. The exordium has the same charm with it, to me, which is found in the allusions to themselves made by other great poets. It even looks like the triumph of Virgil’s nature over his art, or that famous “judgment” for which he is so cried up,—often, I cannot help thinking, both at the expense of his better reputation and the matter of fact. However, if I find Dryden against me, which ought to make me diffident, my confidence is restored by having Spenser and Milton on my side: at least I have a right to consider them so, when they have both imitated this very exordium,—Milton in the commencement of his *Paradise Regained*, and Spenser more particularly in that of his great poem, the *Faerie*



Queene. He was enabled to do so, by his having written pastorals himself. The stanza is a fine one, though the enthusiasm is subdued. I will delay no farther upon this subject, but finish with quoting it :

Lo! I, the man, whose Muse whylome did maske,  
As time her taught, in lowly shepheard's weed,  
Am now enforst (a farre unfitter taske)  
For trumpets stern to chaunge mine oaten reeds,  
And sing of knights, and ladies' gentle deeds;  
Whose praises having slept in silence long,  
Me, all too meane, the sacred Muse areeds  
To blazon broade amongst her learned throng :  
Fierce warres and faithful loves shall moralize my song.

(15) *Doats on her face in that devouring way.*—Spenser, as well as several other poets, has also given an imitation of this magnificent exordium of Lucretius, one of the finest in the world, and worthy of his Greek inspiration : for Lucretius was evidently conversant with the more poetical part of Greek philosophy as well as Epicurus's, and, like all men of imagination, had a religion in spite of himself. Certainly, Venus would never have asked a nobler or more passionate address from the most orthodox of her worshippers.

“ Æneadam genetrix, hominum Divûmque voluptas,  
Alma Venus, cœli subter labentia signa  
Quæ mare navigerum, quæ terras frugiferentes  
Concelebras; per te quoniam genus omne animantum  
Concipitur, visitque exortum lumina solis;  
Te, Dea, te fugiunt venti, te nubila cœli,  
Adventumque tuum: tibi suaves dædala tellus  
Summittit flores; tibi rident æquora ponti,  
Placatumque nitet diffuso lumine cœlum.  
Nam simul ac species patefacta est verna diei,  
Et reserata viget gemtabilis aura Favoni,  
Aëriæ primum volucres te, Diva, tuumque  
Significant initum, percussæ corda tuâ vi.  
Inde feræ pecudes persultant pabula læta,  
Et rapidos tranant amnes; ita capta lepore,  
Ille fabricque talis, omnis natura animantum  
Te sequitur cupide, quò quamque inducens pergis.”

*Denique per maria, ac montes, fluviosque rapaces,  
Frondiferasque domos avium, camposque virentes,  
Omnibus incutiens blandum per pectora amorem,  
Efficit, ut cupidè generatim sæcla propagant."*

Parent of Rome, delicious Queen of Love,  
Thou joy of men below and gods above;  
Who in one round of ever-blest increase  
Roll'st the green regions and the dancing seas;  
From whom all beings catch the race they run,  
And leap to life, and visit the dear sun;  
Thee, Goddess, thee, the winds, the winters fly,  
Thee, and the coming of thy suavity:—  
For thee the earth lays forth its flowers: for thee  
A lustre laughs along the golden sea,  
And lightsome heav'n looks round on all, for thou hast made it free. }  
For soon as Spring, thrown open, re-appears,  
And forth, with kisses, come the genial airs,  
The birds, first smitten to their hearts, announce  
Thee, Goddess, and thy balmy benisons:  
The herds, made wild again, in pastures bound,  
And track the rivers till their mates be found;  
And every living thing, drawn with delight,  
Follows with greedy will the charming of thy might,  
Through seas, o'er mountains, through the fields, the floods,  
And the green houses of the birds, the woods;  
All snatch into their hearts the generous wound,  
That still the ages may roll on, and nature's place be found.

I would fain translate further on, to come at the beautiful passage alluded to in the text; but the poet's fit of enthusiasm certainly makes a pause here. The long line, more than an Alexandrine, into which I have run out at the conclusion, is a modulation often practised by Dryden on passionate occasions, and I think amply deserves to be revived. It lets the spirit have its full vent, and carries it off in triumph, like the long blast of a trumpet. For Spenser's imitation or paraphrase, see the *Faerie Queene*, book 4. canto 10. He lengthens the original into a strain of voluptuous languor, like the incense fuming up from the altars at which it is sung; for the scene is laid in Venus's temple.

(16) *Le donne, i cavalier, l'arme, gli amori.*—The first stanza of the *Orlando Furioso*. Ariosto is said to have written the two first verses over and over again, and to have bestowed upon them an "incredible" attention. Thus it is that even the most enjoying spirits work for immortality.

(17) *His time in polishing another's treasure.*—Berni, who remodelled the *Orlando Innamorato* of Boiardo. The stanza that follows is the exordium of his *Rifacimento*. Though I have been in two eminent cities of Italy, one of them famous for its literature, I have not yet been able to meet with Boiardo's work among the booksellers. I have great faith, however, in these old beginners; and much as I admire Berni, am inclined to suspect that the gallant old Lombard, (who is said to have come galloping home one day in a fit of enthusiasm, and have set all the bells a-ringing in his jurisdiction, because he had found out a fine name for his hero) must have stuff in him well worthy of being read for its own sake. Nor am I shaken in this opinion by the exordium of the original poem, quoted by Sismondi in his *Littérature du Midi de l'Europe*, tom. 2, p. 58, though undoubtedly Berni has given it an address and delicacy, which leave him in full possession of the praise in the text.

I will take this opportunity of observing, now that I am upon the Italian poets, that the opening stanza of Tasso's *Jerusalem* is not what his readers might have expected from that great writer, especially as he had an ear finely tuned for the dignified and imposing. It was Voltaire (confound him!) that made me discover there were too many O's in it,—a fault, seemingly, frivolous enough to notice, but still less worthy of being committed. The charge is undoubtedly true.

Canto l'armi pietosa, e 'l capitano,  
 Che 'l gran sepolcro liberò di Cristo.  
 Molto egli oprò col sennò e con la mano;  
 Molto soffrì nel glorioso acquisto.  
 E in van l'inferno a lui s'oppose; e in vano  
 S'armò d'Asia e di Libia il popol misto;  
 Che il ciel gli diede favore, e sotto ai santi  
 Segni ridusse i suoi compagni erranti.

In revenge, I have the pleasure of knowing that Voltaire began his "epic" with a "vile antithesis," about the "right of victory and the right of birth;"—

Je chante le heros, qui regna sur la France,  
Et par droit de conquête, et par droit de naissance.

A poem on the Droits of Admiralty might open as well. Voltaire was a wag of wags, a writer of wonderful variety, a great puller down of abuses, though he did not always know what to spare by the way,—in short, a great man, whom little ones would in vain undervalue, by detecting some failures in the universality of his information, which would be passed over in his inferiors: but for epics,—

Look at his face, and you'll forget them all.

(18) *But his own airs were sung in every bower.*—I learn this from an interesting article in the Quarterly Review upon Madame de Genlis' *Petrarque et Laure*. There is another, still more so, in the same publication, No. 42, entitled *Narrative and Romantic Poems of the Italians*; and these two, together with one upon Dante in the Edinburgh Review, contain the best and most comprehensive criticism on Italian Poetry, that we have in our language. The second article includes a notice of Mr. Stewart Rose's happy abridgment of the *Animali Parlanti*, and also of that other piece of wit inspired by Italian romance, entitled *a Prospectus of an intended National Poem*, which only failed of popularity (if indeed it has failed) because it took up a remote subject, instead of one connected with existing manners. It is full of a manly and urbane pleasantry; and here indeed it committed another mistake; for it is in vain put into the mouths of those fraternal handicraft's-men who are supposed to write it. The two saddlers have been used to better society than that of the village-squire, and are as gentlemanly as Archbishop Turpin or the Cid Hamet Benengeli.

I must observe that these articles in the Quarterly Review are in it, not of it. They are even said to be translated from the contributions of a celebrated Italian now resident in England; but be this as

it may, the number above-mentioned contains the usual accompaniment of party paltering and hypocrisy, especially in one of those articles on Mr. Shelley, the disgusting falsehoods and malignity of which I have exposed in another place.

(19) *Enmi venuta certa fantasia*.—The exordium of Forteguerri's tragi-comic romance, Riccardetto. He was a dignitary of the church in Rome, full of wit and spirit, who hearing his friends one evening wondering at the toil and trouble which it must have cost Ariosto and others to write such a heap of poetry, undertook to shew them it was no such difficult task, and produced the first canto of his romance by the following evening. It is reported, that he wrote all the other cantos with the same expedition. Nor is it incredible, considering the abundance of rhymes in the Italian language, and the natural poetry into which it runs; but with Forteguerri's leave, however delightful he is, and however he may equal Ariosto in parts, he never rises into his glorious beauty;—unless indeed the latter half of his work is different from the first, for I am now but in the middle of it. If so, I must make him the *amende honorable*.

In the meanwhile, I will make the said *amende* to a couple of other accomplished writers, of whom I spoke too hastily some years ago in another piece of rhyming criticism. If any body happens to have a little book in his possession containing "The Feast of the Poets" (which certain critics are always alluding to and never mentioning) he will oblige me by altering the two couplets in which toasts are proposed, to the following:—

Then, says Bob, "I've a toast," and got up like a gander:  
Says Phœbus "Don't spoil it with prating: its Lander."  
And Walter look'd up too and begg'd to propose—  
"I'll drink him with pleasure," said Phœbus,—“it's Rose.”

What I said in the Feast of the Poets respecting the talents of the great Scottish Novelist, was before he had exhibited his genius in prose narrative, and I have unsaid it elsewhere. The corrections are very likely of no importance after all; but they are made out of a sense of the duty which I owe to truth.

(20) *Not to be found on any other plains.*—An allusion, and I suspect an ironical one, to the poetical society of Arcadians in Rome, of which Forteguerri was a member. The associates had *pastoral names* given them by *diploma*, and assembled in a spot set apart for them out of doors, where they “made as if” they were in Arcadia, and recited sonnets about sheep and pipes. They numbered some other good poets among them, Guidi, Filicaia, &c.; but like all other societies, in which genius is to be patronized by the great, degenerated into a mere set of courtiers and tattling pretenders, worthy of the contempt with which Goldsmith treats them in his essay on the then State of Literature. I believe any body can be a member now, who writes a sonnet and is orthodox.



## A SUNDAY'S FÊTE AT ST. CLOUD.

IF, as some moralists hold, human beings are, generally speaking, happy in proportion as they deserve to be so, the French are the most virtuous people in existence. Let those who dispute the proposition pay a visit to St. Cloud on a Fête-day in summer. I can promise them they shall not repent of their journey, even though it should not solve a problem in morals. If happiness is not symptomatic of something else, it is at least contagious in itself, to a certain degree; and he who can witness the scene in question, and not partake in its joy, must be a philosopher at least, if not something worse.—But if one would join in this scene to any good effect, he must not be a mere spectator; for such a one cannot enter into, and therefore cannot feel, the true spirit of it. And he must not be a critic of forms and rules, lest he should be shocked by finding them forgotten or violated at every turn. Least of all must he affect the *genteel*; for the persons among whom he will find himself are all below the middle class, and moreover they do not understand even the word, to say nothing of the thing; it does not exist in their language—I mean in our sense of it. The French are the genteel<sup>est</sup> people in the world, without knowing it. It is the only good quality they possess that they do not over-rate themselves upon; and their unconsciousness of this makes up for all their failings on the score of vanity and self-conceit.—But to our Fête—one glance at the reali-



ties of which is better than all the mere reflections that can be made to arise out of it. That we may lose no part of the scene, and its characteristic appurtenances, let us join the partakers in it early in the day, as they are setting out, in couples or companies, from that grand starting point in the race of Parisian pleasure, the Place de Louis Quinze. The splendid coup-d'œil, formed by the unrivalled collection of inanimate objects that surround us, must not be allowed to withdraw our attention from the living picture that we are about to form a part of. Yonder lies the road to St. Cloud, along the elevated bank of the river, and beside the great mass of trees forming the Champs Elysées. From every other point of entrance to this magnificent square, Paris is pouring forth her gay streams of pleasure-lit faces and trim forms, till here, in the midst, they cross and mingle with each other, like bees in the neighbourhood of their hive on a sunshiny day. Here, however, at the head of this long string of cabriolets, the din is not so harmonious as that of the scene to which I have just likened the one before us. It is caused by the drivers disputing with each other for the possession of the fares that keep arriving every moment, and of the fares themselves disputing for the price they shall pay—for a Parisian bourgeois thinks a sous saved is worth a century of words, even when pleasure is the purchase; and a Parisian cabriolet driver is not the person to lose a sous, if talking will gain it. Many have agreed for their fare (of from twelve to twenty sous each, according to the skill and patience of the bargain-maker) and are taking their seats, by the aid of that aged crone who presents her chair with an air of anxious politeness, and is content with a half-penny for assisting a whole party. Meanwhile, here rattles along the "chaise and one" of a substantial tradesman of the Rue St. Honoré, containing himself, his spouse (his cabriolet is

the only place in which a Parisian tradesman may take precedence of his spouse) his three *petits*, and his *mouton*. "Gare!" issues at intervals from the noisy vehicle;—not to warn the pedestrians of their danger, but to apprise them of the approach of their betters, which, in the bustle of the scene, they might otherwise overlook. *There* lumbers along slowly and heavily, a clean tilted cart; we cannot penetrate its mysterious covering; but from the *éclats de rire* that burst from within at every jolt of the *pavé*, we may judge that it contains half a score of happy *soubrettes*; scarce more happy now while laughing at their play, than yesterday when singing at their work. If we could peep through that canvas curtain at the back, we might chance to see some of the prettiest faces that ever wore a mob-cap; for the waiting-maids are incomparably the prettiest women in Paris. We might amuse ourselves on this spot for half the day, but that a scene still more attractive awaits us. In passing to it by the side of the Seine, let us not forget to notice the defective taste of the Parisians in respect to water excursions. Their pleasant river winds gracefully through its rich banks to the very gates of the park of St. Cloud—the scene of the Fête; and yet scarcely fifty of the thousands that we shall meet there will have come by water. The truth is, the French are, by nature, the least courageous people in the world; and they are actually *afraid* of the water; at least it gives them an uneasy sensation of possible danger, which interferes with their pleasure, and alloys it. This being the case, they are wise to act as they do; but the fact, supposing it to be one, is curious. They are cowards advisedly, and on principle. When under the immediate influence of excitation, they are capable of the most rash and fool-hardy exploits; and under great circumstances they can "skew their courage to the sticking-place" till it impels them to the most heroic acts of

bravery and self-devotion. But left to themselves, and in the common concerns of life, they are cowards on the same principle as Falstaff was—namely, one of pure good sense. They are too happy in the possession of their life, and too fond of it, to tolerate the bare idea of risking it when they see no occasion. But when death comes, and there is no avoiding it, like Falstaff again they receive it graciously, and “babble of green fields” with their last breath. If their happy hearts do not prove them to be the most virtuous, they impel them to be the wisest people in the world, and perhaps the terms are nearly convertible. One thing I’m sure they are too wise as well as too happy to do—namely, to babble of wisdom and virtue in the midst of describing a Fête-day at St. Cloud—as I am doing now. But I’m an Englishman still, though writing under a foreign sky; and may easily be forgiven. Let me forget this, and at once transport myself and the reader to the bridge of St. Cloud. Here, after twelve o’clock, no carriage is allowed to pass. This regulation is established to prevent the confusion and danger likely to arise from the immense throng of vehicles, of different kinds, that would otherwise be collected in the village. The Fête being as yet scarcely commenced, let us make our way through these lines of booths on the outside of the park-gates, and leaving that to the left, take half an hour’s stroll through the splendid gardens of the Chateau. An abrupt descent, through an opening at one corner of the court-yard, brings us to a low level opposite the grand garden front of the Chateau, which is divided from the grounds by a circular sheet of water confined in a wrought marble basin. From this level you look up a lofty ascent of platform above platform, crowned by a circular tower at the top, and clothed in smooth green turf, studded by clipped box-trees in regular rows and lined on each side by a lofty artificial wood. The

whole of this view, on a sunshiny Sunday (and I think *all* the Sundays are sunshiny in France) enlivened and ornamented as it is by groups of gaily dressed people, seated in circles on the slopes of turf, or wandering in couples among the trees, exactly resembles one of Watteau's pictures; and it cannot well resemble any thing more gay and characteristic in its way. Ascending these slopes to the terrace where the tower is placed, and mounting, if we please, the tower itself, we may gaze upon one of the finest views in existence, of an artificial kind. In front, immediately beneath the perpendicular height of the terrace on which we stand, and sloping from the very edge of it down to the borders of the river below, lay a mass of richly foliated trees, over the flat tops of which we look to the plain beyond. In the midst of this plain, divided from the river by an interval of vineyards and corn-fields, lies Paris, its white walls stretching themselves into the distance on either side, and its innumerable spires, domes, and turrets, lifting themselves up as if to enjoy the air and the sunshine in which the whole seems basking. On one side, on the highest point of ground in the city, the grave Pantheon rises and overlooks its subject buildings, like a king on a watch-tower; and on the other side, the gorgeous dome of the Invalids flaunts and glitters in its gilded robes, like a queen at her coronation. To the left of the city the river stretches away windingly into the blue distance; and on the right, the noble hill on which the Chateau of St. Cloud stands, encloses the scene to a great extent, every where sloping its richly wooded sides into the plain below. Nothing can be finer than the striking contrast afforded to this richly varied scene in front, by turning for a moment to that which completes the circle behind. With the exception of the view down the gardens to the palace front, it consists entirely of an interminable mass of immense forest trees,

very pretty wearing in towns and cities, and is not without important uses on many occasions; but among trees and flowers it is not the thing; and, in a scene like this, it is a mere impertinence. So let us seat ourselves cosily at this vacant table, between this group of pretty *paysannes* and their *bons amis* on one side, and these trim Parisian *soubrettes* and *bonnes* on the other, and forget that there are such places as St. James's and the Chaussée d'Antin in the world. From this spot we can see all that is going on in the Park below; and a gay and busy scene it is. Observe, in that little turfed vale between the trees yonder, that group of "children of a larger growth," preparing to mount the hanging chairs and flying horses of that round-about, and engage in the game of Riding at the Ring. Father and mother, young men and lasses, girls and boys, *bonne* and all, enter into the sport with equal spirit and eagerness; for why should what pleases the one fail to please the other? and why should we refuse to seek pleasure where others can find it? So thinks the Parisian *bourgeois*, and so he acts; and let none but those whose wisdom makes them more happy than his folly (as they may if they please call it) makes him, presume to laugh at him. Another group, of a similar kind, are taking their turns to shoot at a mark with a school-boy's cross-bow. It well becomes us, no doubt, to sneer at their harmless amusement; though we shall do well not to doubt that it is amusement to them; but what will it become *them* to do in return, if they should chance to meet *us* in the fields to-morrow shooting at the happy birds there? Listen to yon band of Savoyard musicians. You'll not easily meet, between this and the gates of Calais, with a more *piquante* figure than that singing girl. Her kerchiefed head, with the little insidious curl peeping out on each side—the trim *tourneure* of her waist, bound in by its black silk

apron strapped over the shoulders—the confidently modest air—the shrill sweetness of her out-of-door voice—and her naïve expression of the wild Tyrolean air she is singing—are, altogether, not to be resisted. And see—she's coming up to us, with her little wooden waiter, to solicit payment for her song. We must not pay such prettiness with ugly copper; but must ensure another air, and a smile and curtsey to boot, by a little ten sous piece. Somehow I never touch one of these little pieces without feeling as if I wanted to give it away. I think they were made for the purpose—and for pretty Savoyard singers in particular. But here's a character of a very different description; in some respects as distasteful and repulsive as the other was attractive. But as he represents a characteristic feature of a French fê<sup>te</sup>, and as none ever take place without him, we must not let him pass by unnoticed. This is the celebrated *grimacier* whom they call *Le Marquis*. Observe how he skips about, like a parching pea. He seems to have borrowed Kehama's power of ubiquity. He is here, there, and everywhere, at the same moment. This man is one of the most striking and remarkable persons I ever saw. In scenes of this kind he haunts you like a spectre. He *appears* before you, without your knowing how he came there—smirks and smiles as if to welcome himself—dances his jig—plays his tune on the violin—insinuates his paper of songs into your hand—and is gone again before you know where you are. He moves about as if the ground burned his feet. He is more like the Goblin Page grown old than any thing else. And yet you cannot fancy him to have ever been any younger than he is, or that he will ever grow older. There is a kind of rattlesnake fascination about this man's look that is unaccountable; it unites the opposite principles of attraction and repulsion. I never see him, or lose sight of him, but I

and tempted to pronounce two lines in an old love song—  
 "Why did he come? Why did he go?" And I'm obliged to  
 repeat this twenty times in an hour; for he's like the Irish-  
 man's passion—he no sooner comes than he goes—but then  
 he no sooner goes than he comes again. He's a perfect  
 Jack-a-lantern—a Will-o'-the-wisp. What is very extraor-  
 dinary, his face is handsome and his person good, and yet  
 the one gives you the idea of perfect ugliness, and the other  
 of extreme deformity. This seems to arise from the tricks  
 he is perpetually playing with them, and the distortions he  
 throws them into. And yet they have that hard, cut, angu-  
 lar appearance, that they seem as if they could never move  
 out of their present position, whatever that may be. His  
 dress has a no less non-descript air than his person, and yet  
 that too is perfectly regular and *in costume*; being an old  
 worn-out court suit, ruffled, painted, and embroidered—  
 dirty white stockings—large paste buckles to his shoes and  
 knees—and a white flaxen pig-tailed wig, which lies on the  
 top of his head, and covers scarcely any of his grey hairs.  
 He never wears a hat.

The Marquis seldom addresses any one personally; and  
 when he does, it is always in a fixed formula, directed to the  
*ladies* of the party. However often he may come in contact  
 with the same party, he invariably offers them a copy of his  
 songs. If it is received, he smirks, bows, skips away, and  
 says nothing. If it is refused, he lays it down on your seat,  
 or table, making a profound obeisance, and saying, "*Jamais  
 je ne manque au respect que je dois à la sexe.*" I never  
 heard him utter any words but these. He is never importu-  
 nate for money. If, when he presents his little waiter, you  
 give him any thing, he bows and is gone in a moment; if  
 you give him nothing, he bows equally low, and is gone as  
 soon.

This singular person is to me a perfect study—a never-failing source of reflection; and accordingly, I never meet him in a scene like this without his marring, for a moment, the careless gaiety that would otherwise entirely possess me. There is something in his air, look, and manner, no less affecting than it is repulsive. His perpetual smiles seem put on to hide the indications of a sick heart; and his ceaseless change of place seems an unconscious endeavour to escape from himself. This man would have made a figure in the world, if fortune would have let him. But perhaps it was in kindness to himself as well as the world that she prevented this; for there is that in his face which says that he is fit for any thing—for much that is good, but for more that is evil. The gossips of Paris say that *Le Marquis* is a spy of the Government; and one would not hastily contradict such good authority! But, if he is a political tool at all, I should take him to be intended as a walking libel on the old regime, started by the Liberals! But let us hope that he will not turn out to be either of these; for he's quite low enough in the scale of humanity already, considering that he was evidently intended to be higher.

Having finished our somewhat homely repast, let us again mingle with the crowd below, that we may have a better opportunity of observing the constitution of it; for it is this that gives the character to the scene. The *professional* part of it we need take little farther notice of; for shewmen and their shews are pretty much alike all over the world. And first let us admire that sweet knot of peasant girls. What can be a prettier antithesis than those gaudy silk aprons—blue, green, pink, and lilac—and those snow-white quaker-like dresses, and plain mob caps? They look like inhabitants of a rainbow, newly alighted on the earth! And their fresh unworldly faces, and sparkling eyes, do not belie the



fancy. See how they thread their way through the crowd, linked arm in arm, as if they did not belong to it! And now they are lost among the trees. But we shall meet them again anon. There are several of these groups in the Park; and the costume is the prettiest I have seen for many a day: a rich silk apron of some one gaudy colour, spread over a perfectly plain snow-white robe, without a single flounce, furbelow, or frill, of any kind whatever; with a white mob cap, equally devoid of ornament. There is no nation in the world in which the lower classes of the females have any pretensions to vie for a moment with the French, as to taste in dress. They display an infinite variety of costume, according to their different station, age, province, district, &c. but each is, generally speaking, curiously finished and perfect in itself, and appropriate to its wearer, without being in the slightest degree fantastical, affected, or *recherché*. The only one I remember, to which these latter qualities can be imputed, is the *cauchoise*, peculiar to a certain district in Normandy. And this, if it is something too gorgeous, glittering, and *outrée* (I speak of the *coiffure*) is altogether so grand in itself, and so becoming to the noble race of creatures who wear it, that it must by no means be made an exception to the rule. What, again, can be more exquisitely neat, simple, snug, and appropriate, than the dress of those fine hale-looking middle-aged dames, the wives of the small *propriétaires* in the neighbourhood!—the snow-white robe; black silk apron; small crimson kerchief, folded over in front, and coming down to a point at the waist behind; and the close-eared fly cap, trimmed with three or four rows of rich Valenciennes lace, and the whole stiffened and quilted into one invariable form, year after year, and from generation to generation. This is another admirable piece of taste in the classes of which I am speaking. They never ape

the class above them, as *all* classes, except the very highest, do in England; but keep fixedly to their own mode and style: which has thus the double advantages of being exclusively *their own*, and of preventing "odious" comparisons and idle emulation.

By this time the dusk of the evening is beginning to draw on, and the dancing has commenced. This is another of the characteristics of these fêtes; and it is perhaps the pleasantest of all, and the most peculiar to them. A set of grooms and kitchen maids dancing quadrilles in the open air, in a style of ease, grace, and self-possession that would not discredit a fashionable ball-room, may be sought in vain elsewhere than in France; but there it almost universally takes the place of the drinking, quarrelling, and debauchery that are the natural and (as it would seem) the necessary finish to every festal meeting of the same class of persons in England and other countries. Under the lofty trees which line the grand avenue of the Park, orchestras are erected, filled with good musicians; lamps are suspended from the branches above; an open space is cleared on the sward or the smooth dry soil below; and numerous parties, consisting of the lowest classes of those who have been partaking in the fête during the day, finish the evening by dancing for two or three hours in the manner I have described. Those of the class above, who think their dignity would be compromised by joining in the dance with the mere *canaille*, do not, however, refuse to gratify their passion for it in imagination, by forming gay circles round the dancers, and attentively looking on.

This, then, is offered as a slight sketch of a few of the characteristic features of a Sunday's Fête at St. Cloud; and if it has given the reader a tenth part of the pleasure the

writer of it experienced the first time he partook in the delightful scene which it endeavours to depict, it will not have been made in vain. But if it has failed to interest him, the reader is welcome to attribute the deficiency (as he safely may) to any thing rather than a want of attractiveness in the subject matter itself.

## APULEIUS.

ST. AUGUSTINE, Bishop of Hippo, one of the most illustrious fathers of the Church, in his celebrated book "of the Citie of God," which was "Englished by J. H. in 1610," has these words:—

"When I was in Italy, I heard such a report there, how certaine women of one place there, would but give one a little drug in cheese, and presently hee became an asse, and so they made him carry their necessaries whither they would, and having done, they reformed his figure againe: yet had he his humane reason still, as Apuleius had in his asse-ship, as himselfe writeth in his booke of the Golden Asse, be it a lie or a truth that hee writeth."

"Nam et nos cum essemus in Italia, audiebamus talia de quadam regione illarum partium ubi stabularias mulieres imbutas his malis artibus, in caseo dare solere, dicebant, quibus vellent seu possent viatoribus, unde in jumenta illico verterentur, et necessaria quæque portarent, postque perfuncta opera iterum ad se redirent; nec tamen in eis mentem fieri bestialem, sed rationalem humanamque servari, sicut Apuleius in libris quos Asini Aurei titulo inscripsit, sibi ipsi accidisse, ut accepto veneno, humano animo permanente, asinus fieret, aut indicavit aut finxit."

Upon which passage a learned Spaniard, named Ludovicus Vives, who, through the munificence of Cardinal Wol-

sey, was Professor of Rhetoric in the University of Oxford, has written a comment in Latin, which has been rendered by the same J. H. thus:—

“Apuleius was a magician doubtlesse: but never turned into an asse. But Lucian before him wrote how hee, being in Thessaly to learne some magike, was turned into an asse instead of a bird: not that this was true: but that Lucian delighted neither in truths, nor truths’ likelihoods. This worke did Apuleius make whole in Latine, adding diverse things to garnish it with more delight, to such as love Milesian tales, and heere and there spinckling it with his antiquaries’ phrases, and his new compositions, with great liberty, yet somewhat suppressing the absurdity of the theame. But wee love now to read him, because he hath said some things there in that new dexterity, which others seeking to imitate, have committed grosse errors: for I thinke that grace of his in that worke is inimitable. But Apuleius was no asse, only he delights men’s eares with such a story; as man’s affection is wholly transported with a strange story.”

Such uncommon praises extorted from one, who, as the admiring commentator ou a Father of the Church, cannot be supposed to have entertained very friendly feelings towards the writings of a Pagan Philosopher, afford a valuable testimony in favour of Apuleius, and are alone sufficient to awaken some curiosity to be acquainted with a work, which we must love to read, and of which the grace is declared to be inimitable.

With respect to the passage cited from St. Augustine, the miscreancy of that reverend person is most striking; for, whatever allowances we may be disposed to make for the habits of credulity, or of bad faith, in which he may have

lived, it is extraordinary that the Bishop should have had the folly to believe, or the audacity to affect to believe, that Apuleius had really been changed into an ass.

As to the note, the appetite with which it is written is remarkable: the world has lost it's appetite, and it is with difficulty that we can now be stimulated even to pick a bit of any wholesome work.

The masses of volumes that we are daily devouring are unhappily no proofs of a healthy desire for food. We cannot conscientiously call that man a glutton, who, a stranger to the baker and the milkman, and having long abjured animal food, has renounced also the bloodless diet that depends upon fruit, vegetables, and puddings, because he can shew on his inhospitable table piles of pill-boxes, heaps of gally-pots, and stacks of empty phials. We can never allow a reputation for voracity to be authenticated by such documents as these. Let any honest man, who has ever read half a page of a good book, or eaten half a plate of good roast beef, decide, whether the literature, with which we are now drugged, most resembles nauseous Galenicals, or savoury kitchen physic.

We may perhaps be permitted, in the short vacation between the last exorbitant attack upon our patience and our pockets, and the next accruing imposition, to enquire a little into the history of Apuleius, and the nature of the Metamorphosis.

Lucius Apuleius lived in the second century of the Christian æra, under the Antonines: he was born of a good family at Madaura, a Roman colony in Africa; his father being one of the principal Magistrates of that city, and his mother, Salvia, a descendant of Plutarch of Chæronea.

Having been educated from his earliest youth at Athens, the Greek was his native language; and coming afterwards to

reside in Rome, he there learnt the Latin (which was little known at Madaura) with painful labour, and without the assistance of a master; "*ærumnabili labore, nullo magistro præeunte*:" the *Metamorphoses* therefore commence with an apology, in case the rude use of any exotic or forensic expression should give offence.

He followed for some time at Rome the profession of an advocate; and for a person, who, amongst his numerous attainments, appears to have been a considerable Dandy, was remarkably successful.

An unusual advancement in the science of jurisprudence, and such a thorough knowledge of the nature of ample redress, and of substantial justice, even when backed by powerful private interest, and of the spirit of the law in general, as could only have been acquired by deep study and respectable practice, are clearly evinced in the narrative of a little adventure, which terminates the first book of the *Metamorphoses*.

We shall be pleased with it as a specimen of the style of a Dandy Advocate: We shall value it also as being a complete refutation of the absurd opinion, that it is impossible for a sound lawyer to find time for any more elegant or liberal studies: and those who are condemned to devote the principal part of their days to legal pursuits, will have no small consolation in reflecting, that one, who was all-accomplished, had as clear an insight into the fundamental principles of right, as any Jurisconsult ever attained to, who had bestowed on these subjects an exclusive and undivided attention.

The adventure is as follows:—

"Having settled these matters and put away my things in my bed-room, I set out for the bath, and, that I might first provide something to eat, I found out the fish-market, and

saw there a fine piece of fish exposed for sale. I asked the price, and being told that five-and-twenty pieces had been refused, I bought it up for twenty. As I was going gently from the market, Pytheas joined me, my fellow-collegian at Athens : after a short time he recognized me, and came to me ; having embraced and saluted me kindly, he said, " It is a long time, my Lucius, since I have seen you ; not surely since we left our master. But what is the occasion of this journey ? " " You shall know to-morrow," I said, " but what is this ? I wish you joy ; for I see attendants with wands, and your dress is altogether that of a person in office."

" I preside over the market," he said, " and fill the office of *Ædile* ; if you wish to buy any thing, I will assist you as far as I can." This I declined, as I had already provided a piece of fish quite sufficient for supper. But notwithstanding, Pytheas caught sight of the basket, and shaking up the fish, that he might see better, said, " What did you give for this trash ? " " With some difficulty I got the fishmonger to take twenty pieces." Upon hearing which, he instantly seized my hand, and hurrying me back into the fish-market, cried, " And from whom did you purchase this trumpery here ? " I pointed out a little old man sitting in a corner, when Pytheas immediately chiding him in a very severe voice, and with all the dignity of an *Ædile*, said, " So then you have no mercy at all even upon my friends, or upon foreigners ? What do you mean by selling so dear such wretched little fishes, and by thus making the flower of the land of Thessaly seem like a solitary rock in respect of dearth of provisions ? But you shall not escape ; I will let you know how, under my magistracy, rogues ought to be punished." Then overturning the basket in the midst, he ordered his officer to get upon the fish, and to tread them to pieces with his feet. My friend Pytheas being satisfied



with this noble severity of manners, informed me, that I was at liberty to withdraw. "It is enough for me, my Lucius, to have thus disgraced that old fellow." Astonished and struck dumb at these exploits, I betook myself to the bath, having been deprived both of my money and of my supper by the resolute wisdom of my sensible fellow-collegian."

"His actis et rebus meis in illo cubiculo conditis, pergens ipse ad balneas, ut prius aliquid nobis cibaturi prospicerem, forum cupedinis peto: inque eo piscatum opiparem expositum video. Et percontato pretio, quod centum numis indicaret aspernatus, viginti denariis præstinaui. Inde me commodum egredientem continuatur Pytheas, condiscipulus apud Athenas Atticas meus, qui me post aliquam multam temporis amanter agnitum invadit, amplexusque ac comiter deosculatus: "Mi Luci," ait, "sat Pol diu est, quod intervissimus. At, Hercules, exinde cum a magistro digressi sumus. Quæ autem tibi causa peregrinationis hujus?" "Crastino die scies," inquam. "Sed quid istud? Voti gaudeo. Nam et lixas et virgas, et habitum prorsus magistratui congruentem in te video." "Annonam curamus," ait, "et Ædilitatem geremus; et, si quid obsonare cupis, utique commodabimur." Abnecebam; quippe qui jam cœnæ affatim piscatus prospereramus. Sed enim Pytheas, visa sportula, succussisque in aspectum planiorem piscibus, "At hæc quisquillas quanti parasti?" "Vix," inquam, "piscatori extorsimus accipere viginti denarios." Quo audito, statim acceptâ dextrâ postliminio me in forum cupedinis reducens, "Et a quo," inquit, "istorum nugamenta hæc comparasti?" Demonstro senicentum in angulo sedentem. Quem confestim pro Ædilitatis imperio voce asperissime increpans, inquit, "Tam jam nec amicis quidem nostris, vel omnino ullis hospitibus parcitis? Quid tam magnis pretiis pisces frivolos vindicatis, et florem Tharsalis regionis instar solitudinis, scopuli edulium cari-

tate ducitis? Sed non impune. Jam enim fano scias, quem admodum sub nostro magisterio mali debeant coerceri." Et profusa in medium sportula, jubet officialem suum insuper pisces inscendere, ac pedibus suis totos conterere. Qua contentus morum severitudine meus Pytheas, ac mihi, ut abirem, suadens, "Sufficit mihi, O Luci," inquit, "seniculi tanta hæc contumelia." His actis consternatus, ac prorsus obstupidus, ad balneas me refero, prudentis condiscipuli valido consilio et numis simul privatus et cœna."

Apuleius enjoyed during his life a very high reputation for deep and various learning, which has been transmitted to the present time by the testimony of numerous and respectable writers in all ages. A slight acquaintance with his works will convince us, that this was obtained in the obsolete method of close application, by extraordinary diligence, patient accurate investigation, and a strict intimacy with learned men and their works; not in the more easy and more fashionable course of gaining a title to renown merely by occupancy. This title is thus described by the lawyers, and in speaking of an advocate, legal terms are the most proper: "Occupancy is the taking possession of those things, which before belonged to nobody.—When it was once agreed that every thing capable of ownership should have an owner, natural reason suggested, that he who could first declare his intention of appropriating any thing to his own use, and in consequence of such intention, actually took it into possession, should thereby gain the absolute property of it—*quod nullius est, id ratione naturali occupanti conceditur*."

Upon these principles in this well-taxed land, and especially at the two Universities, where natural reason governs with uncontrolled and absolute dominion, if any person declare his intention of appropriating the sole knowledge of any subject whatever, unless it interfere with the prior claim of

some one else, which is rarely the case, the claim is immediately allowed, under a tacit agreement, which might be thus expressed:—CLAIMANT. "I understand this subject better than any other man." UNIVERSITY. "Take your reputation, and welcome, only do not talk to us about it: for God's sake! do not compel any of us to know any thing."

If some confirmed sceptic ventures to doubt the reality of such practices, he may satisfy himself by an easy experiment, and readily bring the question to a fair trial: let him only arrogate to himself the exclusive or superior knowledge of any science, language, or author whatever, and, if the world refuses to concede it, his doubt is well founded.

It may be truly said that Apuleius was an universal genius: there are but few subjects which he has not handled. He translated the *Phædo* of Plato, and the *Arithmetic* of Nicomachus: he wrote a treatise *de Republica*; another *de Numeris* and one *de Musica*. His *Convivales Quæstiones*, his *Proverbs*, his *Hermagoras* and his *Ludicra*, are quoted. We have still his *Metamorphoses*, or the *Golden Ass*; his *Apolo*gy; some treatises of Natural Philosophy; of Moral Philosophy; *de Interpretatione*; *de Deo Socratis*; *de Mundo*; and his *Florida*.

He was not more distinguished by his learning, than by an insatiable curiosity to know every thing, which induced him to enter himself in several religious fraternities, and to spend his whole fortune in travelling; in so much, that having a desire to dedicate himself to the service of Osiris, he was in want of money to defray the expense of the ceremonies incident to his reception, and was compelled to pawn even his clothes to make up the necessary sum.

As a listless indifference is the invariable characteristic of dull sluggish minds, and of ages of darkness and of barbarism, so an active, enterprising, and even rash curiosity, is

the constant indication of genius in the individual, and is a most conspicuous quality in periods of liberality and refinement. This curious disposition was doubtless one of the principal causes of his prodigious acquirements; but in order duly to appreciate his motives for desiring to be initiated in the religious mysteries, it is necessary briefly to consider the nature of those institutions.

To countenance any species of superstition is, it must be admitted, beneath the dignity of a philosopher; yet we must remember, that the mysteries were not only of great antiquity, and had been effectually shrouded in impenetrable secrecy (so effectually indeed, that we are now perfectly ignorant of their purport) but, that they were not like the greater part of prevailing superstitions, a farrago of absurd and contradictory dogmas, which inculcate such doctrines as tend to enslave and degrade the soul, which are celebrated by sordid and puerile rites; which can captivate the minds of the lowest vulgar only, and mislead none but the grossest of the ignorant.

The ancient cultivation of the Divine Being was enriched with all that is dazzling in the higher departments of philosophy, and comprehended many unpublished stores of traditionary lore; it was taught in a language unparalleled, and had every decoration of music, perhaps superior to any thing that we can conceive, of painting, most probably, far surpassing the masterpieces of modern artists, and of sculpture and architecture manifestly transcendent and inimitable. The whole was exalted by a chastening taste, the value of which we are now most unfortunately little capable of estimating; and secured by a liberty of thought and speech, of which, could we once more thoroughly feel the worth, we should have again in our power the key to unlock the treasury of all good things.

It is obvious then that there was enough in the mysteries to attract the attention of an ardent mind; the very secrecy alone must have inflamed even ordinary curiosity.

The Golden Asse has been supposed by credulous alchemists to contain the secret of the philosopher's stone; and to its author, as well as to all other persons, who have had the smallest pretensions to distinction, the power of working miracles was attributed by the multitude.

Apuleius was admired for the qualities of his body as well as for those of his mind: his person was well proportioned; he was active and graceful. His face, which has been preserved to us on gems, is exquisitely beautiful: the hair and beard, as in the portraits of Pythagoras and Numa, are smooth and flowing; the attire of the head the same, a plain fillet tied behind, the ends hanging down. The whole countenance overflows with the fine old Platonic hilarity, which we view with astonishment, when found petrified in an onyx or a jasper; the organic remains of some earlier period, when the intellect and morals grew with antediluvian vigour to a gigantic stature.

A certain little modest widow, not unaptly named Pudentilla, had lived thirteen years in a solitary state, sorely against her will and to the great injury of her health, when the advocate came to lodge in her house; her disorder, which during that long-protracted Lent had been continually increasing, accidentally attained its crisis some little time after this arrival; she then found that she must either die or marry somebody, and she had no insuperable objections to her guest.

Her son Pontianus, to whom she had imparted without scruple her delicate situation, and whose filial piety could not bear to witness the anguish of a mother, then above forty years of age, pining for the want of those little conjugal

endearments, which were the more precious, as they were not likely to be lasting, besought his particular friend and fellow collegian, by all that is holy in friendship and sacred amongst men, to soothe his afflicted parent; the lady was neither young, nor beautiful, nor rich, but, for a more disinterested motive, Apulcius generously consented to marry her.

We are told that Pudentilla was a literary character, and was qualified to assist her husband, which some maintain to be a probable reason for his marrying her, as it is said that she used to hold lights to him while engaged in his studies; which expression a dull critic takes literally, and wonders how she could stand by him all night with a candlestick in each hand. Be this as it may, they were united; and considering that children are good things, and that it is good to have children, and being free from all prior and less philosophical intentions, to effect this quiet purpose more quietly, they retired together into the country.

The intercourse of refined minds and of congenial tastes, whether in town or country, is truly delightful. Miss Anna Seward and Dr. Darwin amused themselves in the Doctor's study, as scandal says, but perhaps falsely, by a course of experiments on equivocal generation; by their joint efforts they nearly made a baby.

They had mingled veal broth and mashed potatoes in a glass vessel according to art, and in due time the lady had her reasons for expecting shortly to taste the delicious transports of a mother; but in her eager haste she shook the gravid bottle, and the germ was dissolved into its parent broth. They repeated the process again and again, with every variation that the fertile invention of a poetess could devise, but without success; and, sad to say, the baby-linen still lies by in lavender without a claimant.

However unequivocal the rural occupations of Pudentilla may have been, her happiness was soon broken in upon by a most extraordinary accusation, which roused the amiable pair from the warm bride's favourite covert, the long grass under some shady elm.

The accusation seems to have been almost as bad as a Chancery suit, in demanding the same cruel exposure of family secrets, and the same unfeeling violation of domestic privacy, in drawing matters into court, which are not fit subjects for the jurisdiction of any tribunal; it was less dilatory, but nearly as ruinous and expensive.

Sicinius Æmilianus, the brother of Pudentilla's first husband, accused Apuleius of Magic, and of having gained the affections of his wife by charms and enchantments. On which occasion he pronounced before Claudius Maximus, Proconsul of Africa, his celebrated Apology; a most eloquent oration, which is still extant, and is only less engaging than the Golden Ass. The orator gives many amusing particulars of his own life; exposes admirably, and at great length, the absurdity of the accusation and the malice of his accusers. He must be allowed to have many of the faults, and much of the false eloquence of the age; but it is certain that the speaker possessed in a remarkable degree the criterion of true eloquence, in carrying along with him the feelings and passions of his hearers, and in exciting an intense interest in his favour. He was in consequence triumphantly acquitted. Some writers pretend, that he was tried before Christian judges; but in fact, as the event of the trial alone would lead us to believe, the Proconsul was by religion a Pagan.

It is difficult to imagine what could have occasioned this opinion, unless it be that he was accused, amongst other enormities, of cleaning his teeth. "I saw some time since,"

says the Apology, "that many could scarcely refrain from laughter, when that orator charged me so vehemently with washing my mouth, and spoke of tooth-powder with more indignation than any other man ever spoke of poison."

"Vidi ego dudum vix risum quosdam tenentes, cum mundicias oris videlicet orator ille asperè accusaret, et dentifricium tanta indignatione pronuntiaret, quanta nemo quisquam venenum."

There appear likewise to have been counts in the information for combing his hair. This was not the first time that neatness gave offence, for even Socrates, as Ælian relates, was charged with being curious and nice about his house, and his couch, and his fine slippers.

We cannot help feeling a wish, on reading the defence, that the prosecutor's speech had been preserved; for it seems hardly possible to believe that the principal circumstances from which he sought to infer the undue influence of magic, were, that Pudentilla had consented to marry after thirteen years of widowhood, and that an old woman had not refused a young man; to which it is answered, that the real wonder is that she remained a widow so long; and that there was no need of magic to induce a female to marry a man, a widow a bachelor, an old woman a young man.

"Igitur hoc ipsum argumentum est, nihil opus magiæ fuisse, ut nubere vellet mulier viro, vidua cœlibi, major juniore."

Let the reflection that, even in these days, we have accusations quite as monstrous, supported by no better evidence, but with results much less satisfactory, serve to mitigate our curiosity.

One of the proofs, if generally admitted, would convict all the world of magic; it is this: "Apuleius has something at home, which he worships in secret." "Habet quiddam



Apuleius domi, quod secreto colit." Who then would be safe? who does not stand confessed a wizard? who has not something at home which he worships in secret?

Amongst the ethical writings of Plutarch, in the Nuptial Precepts sent with his good wishes to Pollianus and Eurydice, we read, that the natural Magic of Love had been before confounded with the Black Art; but that the good sense of the royal rival herself could distinguish between the effects of the power of light and of the powers of darkness. "King Philip," says the tale, "loved a Thessalian woman, and she was accused of having given him a love-potion. His wife, Olympias, therefore endeavoured to get the person in her power. But, when she came into her presence, and appeared comely in aspect, and conversed with gentility and prudence, "Farewell accusations," said Olympias, "for you have the love-potions in yourself." "Wherefore (infers Plutarch with his exquisite *bonhomie*) a lawful married wife becomes something quite irresistible, if, placing all things in herself, dowry, and gentility, and love-potions, and the very cestus of Venus, she works out affection by good manners and virtue."

If the sculptured face of Apuleius be a faithful copy of his countenance, and, more especially, if his conversation were as engaging as his writings, a female more attractive than his bride might well exclaim with Olympias, "You have the love-potions in yourself!" The highest authority in the world, that of the divine Plato, in his masterpiece the Symposium, might be cited, if it were necessary to adduce authorities to shew the sovereign influence of conversation in affairs of the heart: the passage is worthy of attention as a marvellous specimen of the antique simplicity, although we do not need proof where it is impossible to doubt:—

"In Elis," says the Divine, "and amongst the Bœotians, and in every other Grecian state where the arts of speaking

flourish not, the law in such places absolutely makes it honourable to gratify the lover; nor can any person there, whether young or old, stain such a piece of conduct with dishonour: the reason of which law, I presume, is to prevent the great trouble they would otherwise have in courting the fair, and trying to win them by the arts of oratory, arts in which they have no abilities."

The advantages of a good face are perhaps a little underrated in a popular anecdote of the facetious John Wilkes, whose excessive squint and whimsical ugliness have been passed on by Hogarth to the laughers of the nineteenth century; and whose estimate of beauty tradition has preserved, to teach humility to the handsome, and confidence to the unhappy plain.

"You say such a one is a good-looking fellow," observed the gallant patriot, "and such a one is an ill-looking fellow: I think nothing of looks. Between the finest face I ever knew and my own, I never found more than half-an-hour's difference with any woman." The patriot did not know the value of half-an-hour in a case of life and death: Sappho, although ugly, was, perhaps, not more ugly than Wilkes, and perhaps Phaon relented half-an-hour too late; had the Lesbian girl been gifted with a better face, she might have found some remedy less alarming than the lover's leap.

There are many editions of the *Metamorphoses*; old and new, but principally old; large and small, but chiefly large; with and without notes, but commonly choaked up with piles of animadversions. We sometimes see one, or two lines of text at the top of a full quarto page, like the chimnies and roofs and battlements of a town rising above a flood; sometimes only a dreary waste of waters, when the Ruhr-ken and the Wower, the Oudendorp and the Elmenhorst have broken their banks, and laid the smiling face of the

text under commentary: then the blank of paper above and the blank of annotation below meet in one uniform line; and the weary eye seeks in vain along the dull Dutch horizon an object to repose upon. In a barn some proportion is observed between the quantity of the grain and the bulk of the chaff and straw; there is some proportion too in their relative value; but in the classics there is none between the edited and the editor, between the expounded and the expositor.

An old edition is prized by collectors for its wood-cuts, which have more merit than is usual with these antique productions; they are ugly and barbarous, but not altogether without spirit.

The Metamorphoses have been translated into all the languages of Europe; the translations are principally old ones. Boiardo, who published an abridged version in Italian, in 1544, concludes his work with a pleasant sort of index; he reckons up all the pretty little *novelle*, which he makes to be twenty-four, in a table at the end of the volume.

At the revival of letters the antient authors were read for some time with enthusiasm, but they soon became suspected, and it seemed better to those who govern our bodies and our minds, to discourage these studies. In order to provide substitutes for such restless spirits, as even the drunkenness of a college life cannot stupify, they restored, in some instances, the old logic of Aristotle, with a dash of divinity; in others, they waste the ingenuity of the youthful mind upon the most subtle analytics. The one side say: "Did they not live very well in the middle ages without knowledge? Can we not do so now? We eat, we drink, and we sleep; we abstain from treading upon the grass: what more did they in the twelfth century?" The others, to justify themselves, enquire: "Do you wish for modern discoveries; for the

latest improvements? Here they are; here is the last, the most modish French *Calculus*. We teach what is new, the newest of the new; we expound last night's dreams." It is no wonder, therefore, that the Golden Ass is but little known: it is a vain attempt, with a few hands, to tow a heavy vessel against a strong wind and a strong tide; but it is as well to take hold of the rope; winds and tides have changed; and we owe all that is precious to vain attempts.

If the curiosity of one person only shall be excited to read the work by these remarks, the pleasure which he will derive from it will repay whatever labour the composition of them has demanded.

Some one, whose conversation is of the narrative order, was relating, at an agreeable dinner party, with unwelcome proximity, the story of his having attended, in the fields, a congregation of Ranters on the preceding Sunday, and that the sermon of the preacher contained a full description of the infernal regions, when the narrator was suddenly cut short by this question: "Well, Sir, did he describe the other place? what did he say of that?" A question actually full of exquisite wit, but, in this instance, most unintentionally so, as the intimate friends of the person who asked it all confidently asserted, and vehemently repelled such an imputation.

For who can describe happiness? With pain we are but too familiar. There is the same difficulty in conveying an idea of an interesting book; we can easily offer specific reasons to deter from the perusal of a worthless composition, but, when we would illustrate literary worthiness, we become vague and general. We ought not to expect that a man, who had just arrived from fairy-land, should be able to give a systematic account of all he had seen there: the poor fellow could only say that every thing was enchanted and

enchanting; he might, perhaps, name one or two of the most striking things that the fairies and their queen had shown him.

The story, as Vives says, is taken from Lucian, and is comprised by him in about sixty pages; it has been filled up and embellished by Apuleius, who has extended it to eleven books: the author, under the name of Lucius, is in both works the hero of the tale. Lucius is a handsome and accomplished young man, full of eager curiosity, who comes to Hypata, in Thessaly, the metropolis of Thessalian Magic. He there lodges with Milo, a rich miser, a pawnbroker and usurer, whose only servant Photis (Lucian calls her *Palæstra*, and says of her, that "the girl was a bold, saucy little thing, and full of grace;" σφοδρά γὰρ ἦν ἰταίμον, καὶ χαρίτων μέσον το κορασίου) soon captivates the foolish young man, who suspected no harm, and continues to captivate the more foolish reader, even after he has a full knowledge of the fatal consequences of such an indiscretion.

After some amusing adventures, Lucius familiarises himself with Photis; the familiarities are described too minutely, especially by Lucian of Samosata, but they may easily be passed over by the not impertinently curious. He learns from her, upon a promise "to remunerate the simplicity of her relation by the tenacity of his taciturnity," that her mistress is a sorceress, and he prevails upon the fragile fair to procure him a sight of her incantations. One night Photis gives him notice that Pamphile is about to change herself into a bird, in order to visit a supremely beautiful youth, whom she loved desperately, and beyond all measure. He accompanies her to the door of her mistress's bed-room; and peeping through a chink, sees Pamphile strip off all her clothes (the loved youth could not have seen more) and rub her body over entirely with an ointment, change gradually

into an owl, and fly hooting away. Man is an imitative animal; Lucius must copy the usurer's wife: he prevails upon the saucy girl to permit him to try the experiment; she gives him a box, he strips himself, and hastily rubs his body with the contents:

"And presently poisoning my arms with alternate efforts," says he, "I was delighted at the thoughts of turning into a similar bird. But there are no little feathers, no little wings at all; my hairs are evidently thickened into bristles, and my tender skin is hardened into a hide; at the tips of both my hands and of both my feet, all my fingers and toes, their number being lost, are forced into one hoof; and from the extremity of my back bone a great tail comes forth. My face soon becomes disproportionate, my mouth wide, my nostrils gaping, and my lips pendulous. So also my ears stick up with immoderate increase. And whilst in despair I contemplate my whole body, I see that I am not a bird, but an ass."

"*Jamque alternis conatibus, libratis brachiis, in avem similem gesticbam. Nec ullæ plumulæ, nec usquam pinulæ; sed planè pili mei crassantur in setas, et cutis tenella duratur in corium; et in extimis palmulis, perduto numero, toti digiti coguntur in singulas ungulas; et de spinæ meæ termino grandis cauda procedit. Jam facies enormis, et os prolixum, et nares hiantes, et labiæ pendulæ. Sic et aures immodicis horripilant auctibus. Ac dum salutis inopia cuncta corporis mei considerans, non avem me sed asinum video.*"

Nothing can equal the despair of Lucius, except the protestations of Photis, who assures him that he may be instantly restored to his human figure upon eating some roses: she regrets that it is too late to procure any that night, but promises to gather some early in the morning; he is per-

sualed meanwhile to be led off quietly to the stable; where he is most unceremoniously kicked out of the stall by his own white horse, and presently afterwards carefully beaten by his own slave with a huge green cudgel.

It is impossible not to pause here and reflect a moment.—The calamity was great; but let us hear his reason for wishing to be able to take the form of an owl at pleasure: he does not dissemble that it was to enable him, without suspicion, to pay nightly visits to certain married ladies in the neighbourhood, and to caress them without injury to their characters, and in spite of all the precautions of jealousy; a natural wish enough perhaps! but some heavy punishment as naturally follows presumption, even in thought. To the frequent practice of lovers calling upon their mistresses in this disguise, he attributes the custom of nailing to the wall of a house the bodies of such owls as have been killed in the vicinity, in order to scare away amorous visitants. The gibbetting is in full force in this virtually-represented nation, as the bodies of feathered malefactors every where testify; but the reason for these executions is not generally known, because the secret of these little misfortunes is better kept than love-secrets commonly are, or because lovers (which it is hard to believe) are no longer willing to be impaled.

Whilst the long-eared platonist is brooding over the injuries which his leathern coat has just sustained, and is expecting that the dawn will bring Photis and roses, a band of robbers plunder the miser's house, enter the stable, load the philosopher with the spoil, and drive him off, in company with his own horse, to their cave. To just such a cave as we were all confined in, when school-boys, with *Gil Blas de Santillane*. Then follow adventures innumerable, in a series and long order, each that succeeds more engaging than

the last; in short, the book cannot be laid down until finished. It must be drunk at one draught. It must be taken up at sunrise on the feast of St. Barnabas, the longest and the brightest day, that the sun may not go down upon the metamorphosed Lucius, but that just before sunset he may eat his roses and become a man.

When young, we all read the *Adventures of a Guinea*, of an *Atom*, of a *Sopha*, of a *Silver Penny*, and of a thousand other things; we have not now a very distinct remembrance of what any one of these books is about, we have only a general recollection that we experienced pleasure in the perusal: it is an agreeable mode of stringing together adventures, and the *Golden Ass* is beyond comparison the best work of the kind.

There is moreover in this book something quite peculiar, of which we see no vestige elsewhere: it excites an expectation even from the commencement, a breathless curiosity, an anticipation of the marvellous so intense, that we feel prepared for whatever happens; it seems to be no more than we expected, however strange, new, or incredible. These feelings are in some degree described in what Lucius experienced the morning after his arrival at Hypata, the city of Magic.

“ I saw nothing in that city which I could believe to be what it really was, but I felt that every thing had been changed into another form by some fatal whisper, so that even the stones which I trod upon had been hardened out of men, and the birds which I heard had been feathered in the same manner, and the trees which surrounded the walls had thus been covered leaves, and that the fountain streams were but flowing human bodies. I expected that the statues and images would presently begin to walk and the walls to speak, that the oxen and cattle would utter some divination, and that from the heavens and the circle of the sun an oracle



would suddenly descend. Being thus confounded, nay, rather benumbed by an excruciating desire, and unable to find any commencement, or even the least trace of what I sought, I wandered about every where."

"Nec fuit in illa civitate, quod aspiciens, id esse crederem quod esset, sed omnia prorsus ferali murmure in aliam effigiem translata, ut et lapides quos offenderem, de homine duratos; et aves, quas audirem, indidem plumatas; et arbores quæ pomerium ambirent, foliatis similiter, et fontanos latices de corporibus humanis fluxos crederem. Jam statuas et imagines incessuras, parietes locuturos, boves et id genus pecua dictura præsagium; de ipso vero cœlo, et jubaris orbe subito venturum oraculum. Sic attonitus, immo verò cruciabili desiderio stupidus, nullo quidem initio vel omnino vestigio cupidiinis meæ reperto, cuncta circuibam."

In some parts of England, as the Western district of Yorkshire, they prepare a sauce for boiled meat, generally for veal, in great measure, if not altogether, of sorrel. The leaves are placed in a wooden bowl, and upon them a large stone ball, like a cannon-ball; the lady-cook, seating herself upon a low stool, takes the bowl between her knees, and by well-timed motions, persuades the stone to roll about, until the sorrel is reduced to a smooth pulp. However incredible it may appear to some, that any effect produced in this manner can be agreeable, the sauce is certainly most delicious; it tastes of the veriest freshness of the spring. Those who have witnessed this singular culinary operation will be forcibly reminded of it by a passage, where Lucius finds Photis preparing, not sorrel-sauce, but some kind of minced-meat, in an attitude nearly similar.

"She was dressed neatly in a linen tunic, with a bright red sash tied rather high under her bosom, and was turning the bowl round and round with her rosy little hands, often

shaking it up gently whilst it revolved, and moving her limbs softly, with her loins just quivering, and her flexible back quietly stirring, she waved it gracefully."

"*Ipsa linea tunica mundulè amictà, et russea fasciola prænitante altiusculè sub ipsas papillas succinctula, illud cibarium vasculum floridis palmulis rotabat in circulum; et in orbis flexibus crebra succutiens, et simul membra sua leniter illubricans, lumbis sensim vibrantibus, spinam mobilem quatiens placidè, decenter undabat.*"

Apuleius seems to have been an enthusiast in hair, and ardently to have admired an elegant head dress; this is not inconsistent with the beauty of his own tresses: he is eloquent and impassioned when he speaks of those of Photis, yet what he says is of too heating a nature to be admitted into a composition of cool criticism, and must therefore be passed over.

But is not the whole work of a somewhat licentious cast? It is a common complaint that novelists always write about love: this is true—but what else have they to write about?—that they write too warmly: this is also true—they do write too warmly; but such as they are we must read them, until some one descends from heaven, at once calm and readable.

The most objectionable part of the *Golden Ass* is an allegorical satire on the female sex, which it is impossible to justify; but at the same time it is so clever, that it is equally impossible for either man or woman to be outrageously angry. On the other hand, the story of Cupid and Psyche is not only one uniform piece of loveliness, but is so delicate (even in the modern and least estimable sense of the word) that it might be read at school by a class of young ladies. This episode is entirely the invention of Apuleius; it fills

more than two whole books, and is replete with erudition and pleasure.

The Emperor Severus professed to despise what he called the Punic tales of Apuleius;—the censure of an Emperor may recommend them to some readers.

Macrobius, in his Exposition of the *Somnium Scipionis* of Cicero, says:—

“Fables that delight the ear, like the comedies which Menander and his imitators wrote for representation, or stories full of the feigned adventures of lovers, in which Petronius practised much, and Apuleius sometimes amused himself to our great surprise” (and to the sorrow of consular men like myself, who cannot afford to be jocose) “all fables of this kind, which profess only to delight the ears, wisdom banishes from her sanctuary to the cradles of nurses.”

“*Auditum mulcent, velut comediae, quales Menander, ejusve imitatores agendas dederunt: vel argumenta fictis casibus amatorum referta: quibus vel multum se Arbiter exercuit: vel Apuleium nonnunquam lusisse miramur. Hoc totum fabularum genus, quod solas aurium delicias profitetur, e sacrario suo in nutricum cunas sapientiae tractatus eliminat.*”

If the use of such books only as they can read without delight be permitted to the wise, we the foolish shall almost doubt, whether it is not better to lie in the cradle with the nurse, than to sit in the sacristy with the philosopher.

A person who would take the pains and had the requisite qualifications, and he must have a great many, might draw up a very curious and instructive commentary on this romance, which contains many uncommon words, worthy of explanation, as being intimately connected with the history and manners of the second century. The last book

is singularly interesting, and indeed *unique*; it is elegant and erudite, and comprehends many of the more secret doctrines of philosophy and of the antient religion of Egypt; a learned and copious description of certain sacerdotal ceremonies, and of the initiation into the mysteries of Isis and Osiris.

By patient research and diligent investigation, many facts respecting the mysteries, now buried in unopened volumes, might be brought to light: the enquiry, as well as the results, would afford no common pleasure; whether leisure and opportunity for these pursuits will always be wanting, for the present, at least, it is impossible to determine.

There are barbarisms, there is bad taste, there is false eloquence in the Golden Ass; there are all these faults and many more: but nevertheless let him who has read it read it again; let him who has never read it, all other business being omitted, suddenly read it; and, if he cannot procure a copy on easier terms, let him, Apuleius-like, sell his coat and buy one.

All that now remains, is to call the attention of the learned world to the conclusion of the Apology, in which the author warns all men against marrying a widow, for this plain reason, "because she can have nothing *impossible* about her:" the passage is as follows:—

"Virgo formosa, etsi sit oppidò pauper, tamen abundè dotata est. Adfert quippe ad maritum novum animi indolem, pulchritudinis gratiam, floris rudimentum. Ipsa virginitatis commendatio jure meritòque omnibus maritis acceptissima est. Nam quodcumque aliud in dotem acceperis, potes cum libuit, ne sis beneficio obstrictus, omne ut acceperis retribuere; pecuniam renumerare, mancipia restituere, domo demigrare, prædiis cedere. Sola virginitas, cum semel accepta est, reddi nequitur; sola apud maritum

ex rebus dotalibus remanet. Vidua autem qualis nuptiis venit, talis divortio digreditur; nihil adfert inoposcibile."

\* The authority is weighty, and the Philosopher did not speak without experience: but if any one, notwithstanding, shall have the hardihood to despise this caution, let him accept, as a nuptial benediction, the phrase in which Photis used to say "Good night!"

QUOD BONUM FELIX ET FAUSTUM.

## MINOR PIECES.

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### TO A SPIDER RUNNING ACROSS A ROOM.

Thou poisonous rascal, running at this rate  
O'er the perplexing desart of a mat,  
Scrambling and scuttling on thy scratchy legs,  
Like a scared miser with his money-bags;  
Thou thief—thou scamp—thou hideous much in little,  
Bearing away the plunder of a spital,—  
Caitiff of corners,—doer of dark deeds,  
Mere lump of poison lifted on starv'd threads,  
That while they run, go shuddering here and there,  
As if abhorring what they're forc'd to bear,  
Like an old bloated tyrant, whom his slaves  
Bear from the gaping of a thousand graves,  
And take to some vile corner of a court,  
Where felons of his filthy race resort,—  
I have thee now;—I have thee here, full blown,  
Thou lost old wretch, benighted by the noon!  
What dost thou say? What dost thou think? Dost see  
Providence hanging o'er thee, to wit, me?  
Dost fear? Dost shrink with all thine eyes to view  
The shadowing threat of mine avenging shoe?  
Now, now it comes;—one pang,—and thou wilt lie  
Flat as the sole that treads thy gorg'd impurity.

Yet hold :—why should I do it? Why should I,  
 Who in my infidel fidelity,  
 Believer in the love, though not the wrath,  
 Have spared so many crawlers o'er my path,—  
 Why should I trample here, and like a beast,  
 Settle this humblest of them all and least?  
 The vagrant never injured me or mine,  
 Wrote no critiques, stabb'd at no heart divine,  
 And as to flies, Collyer himself must dine.  
 Flies may be kill'd as speedily as mutton,  
 And your black spider's not your blackest glutton.  
 The vermin's a frank vermin, after all;  
 Makes no pretence to a benignant call;  
 Does not hold up a hideous white hand,  
 To tickle grandams to his promised land;  
 Nor pulls white handkerchiefs from out his blackness,  
 To wipe the tears,—that give a surfeit slackness.  
 He's not the Laureat, not my turn'd old Bob;  
 Not Bull the brute, nor Gazetteer the grub:  
 He does not “ profess Poetry,” like Mill;  
 Music, like Buzby; nor, what's higher still,  
 “ Moral Philosophy,” like wicked Will.  
 He swells, I grant, and 'tis with poison too;  
 But not, toad-eating Muddyford, like you:  
 He plunders, and runs off; but not like Theod.,  
 To make amends by slandering for King Ehud:  
 He skulks; but 'tis not as “ dear Ally” does,  
 To pry and pounce on females, and keep close }  
 At fingers only that can pull a nose.  
 Honest the rogue is, in his way,—hey, Groly?—  
 And does not call his snares and slaughters “ Holy;”  
 Nor like the Russian that insulted Spain,  
 Cry “ Manners,” and affect the gentleman.

He holds to ~~what he is~~, like her that bore him,  
 A spider, as his father was before him.  
 'Twas Cowl, not he, that by old Gizzard's fire,  
 Born of a man, turn'd reptile and mere liar,  
 And chang'd his shape with his own fright, as mothers,  
 Their tender burthen incomplete, change others.  
 And have I spared the very worst of these  
 A thousand times, and all for their own ease,—  
 Let them crawl on, and wink'd at Gizzard's self,  
 To tread out thee, poor emblematic elf?  
 Thee, whose worst vice is, that thy hang-dog looks  
 Remind us of his face, not of his books,  
 For all the poison, clubb'd from all thy race,  
 Could not do that: you're safe from that disgrace.  
 Have I, these five years, spared the dog a stick,  
 Cut for his special use, and reasonably thick,  
 Now, because prose had fell'd him just before;  
 Then, to oblige the very heart he tore;  
 Then, from conniving to suppose him human,  
 Two-legg'd, and one that had a serving-woman;  
 Then, because some one saw him in a shiver,  
 Which shewed, if not a heart, he had a liver;  
 And then, because they said the dog was dying,  
 His very symptoms being given to lying?  
 Have I done this? Have I endur'd e'en Murrain,  
 Whom even his own face finds past enduring,  
 Trying to slip aside from him, and cut him,  
 When honest men ask questions that don't suit him?  
 Have I let strut, behind their dunghill screens,  
 All the brisk crows in Scotch magazines,  
 Who take for day their crackling Northern Lights,  
 And scream, and scratch, and keep it up o' nights,  
 Braggarts with beaten plumes, and sensual hypocrites?  
 Him too who feeds them, and in whom there run



All Curll's and Osborn's melted brass in one,  
 (Blackguard, thought wrong by the young trade, but wronger  
 By those whose consciences have eaten longer)  
 Have I spared him, when, with a true rogue's awe,  
 Not of the truth or justice, but the law,  
 He lay before my feet, and proffer'd me  
 His rascal money for indemnity?  
 In scorn I let him go, just taught, it seems,  
 How to call people more ingenious names;  
 For which, I own, I merit the reproofs  
 Of all the world, but those who read his huffs.

Go, you poor wretch,—I mean the spider; go,  
 And take care how you bite Sir Hudson Lowe.

### SOUTHEGONY,

#### OR THE BIRTH OF THE LAUREAT.

*Incipe, parve puer, risu cognoscere matrem.*—VIRG.

Laugh, if you can; but one way or another,  
 Do pray, old boy, begin to know your mother.

WE'VE all of us read, in some poet or other,  
 That Pallas was born without ever a mother;  
 And 'tis equally certain, or more certain rather,  
 That Mars was produc'd without ever a father:  
 For as to old Jupiter's pain in his brows,  
 The reason for that might still lie with his spouse;  
 And as to his getting the thing in his head,  
 It's what many men do, who are not brought to bed:  
 Whereas that a son should be born of a lady,  
 And none know the father, not even the Cadi,  
 Or rather, that there's been no father at all,  
 (For it couldn't be Peter, and couldn't be Paul,

And then, as the village says, "Who ~~could~~ it be?")  
Is a point on which doctors of all sorts agree.

Be this as it may, the immortals above us  
Were talking of these things, and saying "Lord love **us**!"  
When Jupiter, coming from council upon 'em,  
(You'd have thought that the sound of his step had undone 'er  
But luckily he had escap'd their descriptions)  
Said, "What do you say there about my conceptions?"  
Conceive, if you can, a strange creature I've thought on,  
For bard to the era about to be brought on,—  
A jumble, a Janus, a Jack-of-all-trades,  
A prostitute pen, yet the prince of old maids;  
The ghost of a rhyming Inquisitor's rack;  
A crack on the crown, and a crown on the crack;  
A "Honi soit" zealot for Liberty's charms,  
Subsiding in softness beneath the King's Arms;  
The vice contradiction; the virtue in if;  
A weathercock image, so solemn and stiff,  
Who first holds up one hand, and then holds up t'other,  
As pompously fierce for one wind as another;  
A mind, like his visage, by nature intended  
For something, but left till too late to be mended,  
That promises strength, but retreats in weak dudgeon,  
The nose of a hawk, and the mouth of a gudgeon;  
In short, a grotesque, any thing but a true thing,  
Part human, part brutal, part flowery, all nothing;  
That begins like a man, but possessing no substance,  
Runs flourishing off, like the figures on hob-stands,  
And foams at a creature that guards t'other side,  
To wit, it's own self, and identical pride.  
"I want such a being," said Jove in conclusion,  
"To put, with his praises, his friends in confusion,

And furnish crown'd heads with a shabby phenomenon,  
Fit for some certain disasters then coming on."

"I cannot conceive such a being," said Juno :

"Don't mention," said Venus, "such *juncta in uno*:"

"It's much beyond us," cried the whole of the goddesses,  
Bridling, and settling their several boddices.

"Well," cried a damsel, who kept Juno's peacock,

"It seems now as easy to me as *hic hæc hoc* :

Good lord! sure my mistress is joking. Why I  
Could conceive twenty such, or I'd like to know why.

Now the damsel who thus indiscreetly took on her,  
By poets on earth is yclept Mrs. Honour :  
But in heav'n, for her airs and her "pompous inanity,"  
Gods name her rightly, and call the jade Vanity.

"Do," said Jove laughing. He took from a shelf  
The work of a bard who was big with himself,  
And throwing it at her, the girl, as they say,  
Seem'd struck of a heap, and look'd down, and said "Hey!"

A ludicrous gravity roll'd in her eyes,  
She looks pregnantly vacant, and foolishly wise,  
And picking her skirts up, sail'd off through the skies. }  
You'd have thought all the Gods would have split 'em for  
laughter,  
To see her waist first, and herself coming after.

That very day nine weeks, if gossips be right,  
My Southey, with green and grey head, came to light;  
And 'tis said, that before he had found out his legs,  
The rogue taught his grandmother how to suck eggs.

## LINES OF MADAME BHOOUTETOT.

Jeune, j'aimai. Le temps de mon bel âge,  
 Ce temps si court, l'amour seul le remplit :  
 Quand j'atteignis la saison d'être sage,  
 Toujours j'aimai : la raison me le dit.  
 Mais l'âge vient, et le plaisir s'envole ;  
 Mais mon bonheur ne s'envole aujourd'hui,  
 Car j'aime encore, et l'amour me console ;  
 Rien n'aurait pu me consoler de lui.

When young, I lov'd. At that delicious age,  
 So sweet, so short, love was my sole delight ;  
 And when I reach'd the season to be sage,  
 Still I lov'd on, for reason gave me right.  
 Age comes at length, and livelier joys depart,  
 Yet gentle ones still kiss these eyelids dim ;  
 For still I love, and love consoles my heart ;  
 What could console me for the loss of him ?

## TALARI INNAMORATI.

DEAR Molly, who art the best comingest lass,  
 With a foot not so big as the slipper of brass,  
 Or as her's, whom a wag, strangely gifting with wrong clo'es,  
 Calls, most unbecomingly, Ninon de Long-clo'es,  
 (Of whom 'tis recorded, that in a ragout  
 Some young men of fashion once toss'd up her shoe),  
 Take a story that came in my head t'other day,  
 As writing a libel, all careless I lay,  
 So good-natur'd am I, and soon carried away.

You must know, that 'twas after a day of much flight,  
 The feather'd god Mercury got home one night :  
 He took off his winged hat, flagging with dews,  
 And shook off as quickly his two winged shoes :  
 And ringing for Hebe, said, "Starlights and nectar ;  
 And go and tell Venus, you rogue, I expect her."  
 So saying, he threw his light legs up together,  
 And stretched, half-reclin'd, on his couch of dove's feather,  
 And taking his lute up, and thumbing, and humming,  
 Was about to sing something to hasten her coming,  
 When lo ! the two shoes that I spoke of, instead  
 Of departing, as usual, like pigeons, to bed,  
 Began flutt'ring and making genteel indications  
 Of delicate feelings and nice hesitations,  
 And then walking forward, stood still, rather wide,  
 When the one drew his heel to the other's inside,  
 And suggesting a bow (for it well may be said,  
 You can't make a bow without having a head)  
 Told the god with a sigh, which they meant to go through him,  
 That they had, if he pleas'd, a small prayer to make to him.

"How now !" said the God ; "what, my shoes grown pa-  
 thetic !

This indeed's a new turn of the peripatetic.

What's the matter, my friends ? Why this bowing and  
 blushing ?

Has Ganymede giv'n you too careless a brushing ?  
 Do you ache yet from Jupiter's tread on your toes,  
 When I spoke, before Juno, of Chloris's nose ?  
 Or does she keep charge of his pen and ink still,  
 And force him to borrow another new quill ?"

"No: nothing of all this, dear master," said they ;

"But the fact is,—the fact is—" "Well, what is it, pray ?"

"Why, you know, Sir, our natures partake of the dove,  
And in fact, Sir,—in short, Sir,—we've fallen in love."

"In love! and with what, pray? With Rhodope's shoes?  
Or with Rhodope's self?" cried the god at this news.\*  
"I have heard of shoes 'doated on,' during a fashion,  
But never of any returning the passion."

"We beg, Sir," said they, "that you wouldn't chagrin us:  
Who, or what could it be, but the feet of your Venus?  
To see them, to touch them, and yet be heart-whole,  
How could we, yet have understanding and soul?  
When we heard, t'other day, that dog Momus object,  
For want of a fault in 'em, that her shoes creak'd,  
We could fairly have jump'd at the rascal, and kick'd  
And so, Sir, we have to request, that whenever  
We're not upon duty, you'll do us the favour  
Of letting us wait on those charmers so little,  
To which Thetis's silver are surely queen's-metal.  
The soft-going sandals of Rhetoric's god  
Will make her move always as loveliness should;  
Will put a perfection, Sir, into her shoe-tye,  
And give the last lift to her exquisite beauty."

\* Rhodope, or Rhodopis (Rosy-face) the most romantic of the courtezans of antiquity. She began with falling in love with her fellow-servant Æsop; and ended with consecrating a number of costly spits in the temple of Apollo at Delphos, some say with erecting one of the pyramids of Egypt. She inspired a violent passion in Charaxes, the brother of Sappho, who takes upon herself, in Ovid, to complain of it. There is a pretty legend of her, in which those who are fond of tracing every thing to the ancient world, may find the origin of the Little Glass Slipper. Ælian says, that as she was bathing, an eagle carried away one of her sandals, and flying with it over Memphis, where Psammetichus, king of Egypt, was sitting in judgment, dropped it in the monarch's lap. Struck with its extraordinary beauty, he had the owner found out, and married her.

"Be it so," replied *Hermes*; "but take care, you rogues;  
Don't you keep her from me, or I'll turn you to clogs."

"We cannot, we cannot," cried they, "dearest master;  
And to prove it at once, she shall come to you faster."

So saying, they rose, and skimm'd out of the door,  
Like a pair of white doves, when beginning to soar:  
They met her half-way, and they flew to her feet,  
Which they clasp'd in a flutter, the touch was so sweet;  
And they bore her in silence, and kiss'd all the while  
The feet of the queen of the beautiful smile;  
And lo! in an instant, redoubled in charms,  
The soft coming creature was pitch'd in his arms.

#### RHYMES TO THE EYE.

BY A DULCIBLE GENTLEMAN.

I LONG'D for Dublin, thinking there to laugh  
With jolly tipplers o'er their usquebaugh;  
For I've a merry heart, and love that juice,  
Which London hath not good at any price.  
Thither I went; but once ('twas at the Plough)  
Some time uncounted after I'd enough,  
I sallied forth, and in the street, alas!  
I plunged into a horrible fracas,—  
So horrible, that all my bones did *ach*,  
And I was forced to ride home in a couch,  
Entreating Dora to achieve a *pot*  
Of salve from the Chirurgical Depot.\*

\*I am aware this rhyme may be carped at. However, Pope rhymed "way" and "away" together, and that is good authority. For my part, I think "pot" and "pot" rhyme very well together.—*Note by the Dulcible Gentleman.*

Truly I cannot boast of such *ecstasies* .  
 As could my friend, whose sword, *this way and that*,  
 Brandish'd through Islington and Highgate *thorps*,— .  
 For he belongs unto the Light Horse *Corps* !  
 Next morn I had a great mind to indict  
 The bludgeoners, but could not well convict ;  
 And fain was I to take their promises  
 Of good behaviour touching many bruises.  
 But if again they catch me in that region,  
 (Well-named *Ire-land*) since I am not a lion,  
 The world may call me fool, and I'll say—" *yes*,"  
 For I don't like bones batter'd and black eyes.  
 No! rather would I to *Constantinople*,  
 Although the Turk's-men are a strange *people*,  
 And I've no predilection for the *plague*,  
 Than drink in a continued fearful *ague*.

#### LINES TO A CRITIC.\*

HONEY from silkworms who can gather,  
 Or silk from the yellow bee?  
 The grass may grow in winter weather,  
 As soon as hate in me.

\* We have given the stupid malignity of the Investigator a better answer than it is worth already. The writers must lay it to the account of our infirmity, and to a lurking something of orthodoxy in us. But in these "Lines to a Critic," the Reverend Calumniator, or Calumniators, will see what sort of an answer Mr. Shelley would have given them: for the beautiful effusion is his. Let the reader, when he has finished them, say which is the better Christian,—the "religious" reviver of bitter and repeated calumnies upon one who differs with him in opinion, or the "profane" philanthropist who can answer in such a spirit!



Hate men who cant, and men who pray,  
 And men who rail like thee;  
 An equal passion to repay,—  
 They are not coy like me.

Or seek some slave of power and gold,  
 To be thy dear heart's-mate,  
 Thy love will move that bigot cold,  
 Sooner than me, thy hate.

A passion like the one I prove  
 Cannot divided be;  
 I hate thy want of truth and love,  
 How should I then hate thee?

### THE MONARCHS,

#### AN ODE FOR CONGRESS.

WHEN Congress (heav'nly maid!) was young,  
 While scarcely yet Rossini sung,  
 The Monarchs oft, to flesh the sword,  
 Throng'd around the festive board;  
 Exulting, carving, hobbing, nobbing,  
 Possess'd of what they'd all been robbing.  
 By turns they felt each other's crown,  
 Disturb'd, delighted, rais'd, pull'd down;  
 Till once, 'tis said, when all were maudlin,  
 Fill'd with Rhenish, flouncing, twaddling,  
 From the supporting statesmen round  
 They snatch'd the first pens that they found,  
 And as they once had learnt apart  
 Sweet lessons of the pot-hook art,

Each (for madness rul'd the hour),  
Would prove his own didactic power.

First Fred. his hand, it's skill to try,  
Upon the foolscap wilder'd laid,  
And back recoil'd, he knew not why,  
At the remarks himself had made,

Next Alec. rush'd ; his eyes, on fire,  
In wanderings own'd their secret stings ;  
In one plain word, he play'd the liar,  
And wrote the hurried hand of kings.

With woeful scrawl came poor old Frank ;  
Low stupid things his grief beguil'd ;  
A solemn, strange, and mingled crank ;  
'Twas sad in *Ps*, in *Qs* 'twas wild.

But thou, old boy, with pies so rare,  
What was thy delight, Des-Huîtres !  
Still it whisper'd—"Spain—they'll beat her !"   
And bade the bully boys at distance hail :  
Still would his munch the fish prolong,  
And still from creams, and cakes, and ale,  
He cull'd a finish still, although 'twas wrong :  
And where his tiddest bit he chose,  
Soft Montmorency's voice came blessing through the nose,  
And old Des-Huîtres smil'd, and waiv'd the chaplain's prayer.

And longer had he din'd ; but with a groan  
The Duke came saying "Oh !"   
He threw his blood-stain'd sword in wonder down,  
And with a withering look,  
The war-denouncing trumpet took,

And shook a shake so drear of head,  
 Was ne'er pacific skull so full of No!  
 And eyer and anon he beat  
 The devil's tattoo with curious heat;  
 And though sometimes, each dreary pause between,  
 Dejected Dangy at his side,  
 Her man-subduing voice applied,  
 Yet still he kept his sad and alter'd mien,  
 While each gulp'd oath and curse seem'd bursting to be said.

Thy numbers, Armament, to nought were fix'd,  
 Sad proof of thy distressful state;  
 Of differing themes the veering song was mix'd,  
 And now it call'd "To Arms!" now raving said,  
 "No,—wait."

With eyes up-turn'd, as one amaz'd,  
 James Monro sat aloof, and gaz'd;  
 And from his calm sequester'd seat,  
 (A place by distance made more sweet)  
 Sent through the newsman's horn his free-born soul:  
 And dashing oft from kindred ground  
 Doubling journals join'd the sound:  
 Through courts and camps the better measures stole,  
 Or in some patriot's themes, with fond delay,  
 Round an awful calm diffusing,  
 Love of peace, and letter'd musing,  
 Their useful murmurs plied away.

But oh! how finished was the happy tone,  
 When brave San Miguel, Spaniard good and true,  
 (His No! to all the monarchs flung,  
 His face on fire, yet laughing too)  
 Read that inspiring Note, with which the Cortes rung!

The freeman's truth, to freemen only known !  
 Portugal sped it's chaste-eyed Queen ;  
 Writers and Liberty-Boys were seen  
 Peeping their prison-bars between ;  
 Brown Italy rejoic'd to hear,  
 And courts leap'd up, and seiz'd their hats for fear.

Last came Greece's crowning trial :  
 She, by painful steps advancing,  
 Had first to foreign lands her pray'rs address'd ;  
 But soon she stood upon her own denial,  
 The noble voice fair Freedom lov'd the best.  
 They would have thought who heard the sound,  
 They saw in Marathon her ancient men  
 Crushing the turban'd slaves again,  
 For all their mighty pomp and prancing ;  
 While as the flying Turks kiss'd their steeds' manes,  
 Russ left with Pruss their strange, fantastic ground :  
 Free were our presses seen, our trade unbound,  
 And Frank, amid their frolic play,  
 As if he knew no longer what to say,  
 Shook heaps of powder from his head and brains.

O Freedom, self-defended maid,  
 Friend of Pleasure, Wisdom's aid,  
 Why, goddess, why, so long denied,  
 Bid not these idler's stand aside ?  
 In the Old World, in the New,  
 You've shewn us what your will can do,  
 And why then longer waste a thought  
 On full-grown boys, that *won't* be taught ?  
 Where is thy native, simple heart,  
 Devote to virtue, fancy, art ?

SEVEN PIECES.

as in that older time,  
Self-sufficing, pure, sublime;  
Thy wisdom, in that godlike age,  
Fill thy recording children's page.  
'Tis said, and I believe the tale,  
Thy humblest friends could more prevail,  
And talk'd in Greek of finer things,  
Than all which charms the ear of kings,  
Aye, all together, meek and slaughterly,  
Bob, Chateaubriand, and the Quarterly.

O bid their vain endeavours cease;  
Complete the just designs of Greece;  
Return in all thy simple state,  
And clip the tails that kings think great.

LONDON

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THE  
LIBERAL.

No. IV.

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MORGANTE MAGGIORE

DI

MESSER LUIGI PULCI.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Morgante Maggiore, of the first canto of which this translation is offered, divides with the Orlando Innamorato the honour of having formed and suggested the style and story of Ariosto. The great defects of Boiardo were his treating too seriously the narratives of chivalry, and his harsh style. Ariosto, in his continuation, by a judicious mixture of the gaiety of Pulci, has avoided the one, and Berni, in his reformation of Boiardo's poem, has corrected the other. Pulci may be considered as the precursor and model of Berni altogether, as he has partly been to Ariosto, however inferior to both his copyists. He is no less the founder of a new style of poetry very lately sprung up in England. I allude to that



of the ingenious Whistlecraft. The serious poems on Roncesvalles in the same language, and more particularly the excellent one of Mr. Merivale, are to be traced to the same source. It has never yet been decided entirely, whether Pulci's intention was or was not to deride the religion, which is one of his favourite topics. It appears to me, that such an intention would have been no less hazardous to the poet than to the priest, particularly in that age and country; and the permission to publish the poem, and its reception among the classics of Italy, prove that it neither was nor is so interpreted. That he intended to ridicule the monastic life, and suffered his imagination to play with the simple dulness of his converted giant, seems evident enough; but surely it were as unjust to accuse him of irreligion on this account, as to denounce Fielding for his Parson Adams, Barnabas, Thwackum, Supple, and the Ordinary in Jonathan Wild,—or Scott, for the exquisite use of his Covenanters in the "Tales of my Landlord."

In the following translation I have used the liberty of the original with the proper names; as Pulci uses Gan, Ganelon, or Ganelone; Carlo, Carlomagno, or Carlomano; Roncel, or Rondello, &c. as it suits his convenience, so has the translator. In other respects the version is faithful to the best of the translator's ability in combining his interpretation of the one language with the not very easy task of reducing it to the same versification in the other. The reader, on comparing it with the annexed original, is requested to remember that the antiquated language of Pulci, however pure, is not easy to the generality of Italians themselves, from its great mixture of Tuscan proverbs; and he may therefore be more indulgent to the present attempt. How far the translator has succeeded, and whether or no he shall

continue the work, are questions which the public will decide. He was induced to make the experiment partly by his love for, and partial intercourse with, the Italian language, of which it is so easy to acquire a slight knowledge, and with which it is so nearly impossible for a foreigner to become accurately conversant. The Italian language is like a capricious beauty, who accords her smiles to all, her favours to few, and sometimes least to those who have courted her longest. The translator wished also to present in an English dress a part at least of a poem never yet rendered into a northern language; at the same time that it has been the original of some of the most celebrated productions on this side of the Alps, as well as of those recent experiments in poetry in England, which have been already mentioned.

---

## TRANSLATION.

## MORGANTE MAGGIORE.

## CANTO I.

## I.

IN the beginning was the Word next God;  
God was the Word, the Word no less was he :  
This was in the beginning, to my mode  
Of thinking, and without him nought could be :  
Therefore, just Lord ! from out thy high abode,  
Benign and pious, bid an angel flee,  
One only, to be my companion, who  
Shall help my famous, worthy, old song through.

## II.

And thou, oh Virgin! daughter, mother, bride,  
Of the same Lord, who gave to you each key  
Of heaven, and hell, and every thing beside,  
The day thy Gabriel said, "All hail!" to thee,  
Since to thy servants pity's ne'er denied,  
With flowing rhymes, a pleasant style and free,  
Be to my verses then benignly kind,  
And to the end illuminate my mind.

## III.

'Twas in the season when sad Philomel  
Weeps with her sister, who remembers and  
Deplores the ancient woes which both befell,  
And makes the nymphs enamour'd, to the hand  
Of Phæton by Phœbus loved so well  
His car (but temper'd by his sire's command)  
Was given, and on the horizon's verge just now  
Appear'd, so that Tithonus scratched his brow:

## IV.

When I prepared my bark first to obey,  
As it should still obey, the helm, my mind,  
And carry prose or rhyme, and this my lay  
Of Charles the Emperor, whom you will find  
By several pens already praised; but they  
Who to diffuse his glory were inclined,  
For all that I can see in prose or verse,  
Have understood Charles badly—and wrote worse.

## V.

Leonardo Aretino said already,  
That if, like Pepin, Charles had had a writer  
Of genius quick, and diligently steady,  
No hero would in history look brighter ;  
He in the cabinet being always ready,  
And in the field a most victorious fighter,  
Who for the church and Christian faith had wrought,  
Certes far more than yet is said or thought.

## VI.

You still may see at Saint Liberatore,  
The abbey no great way from Manopell,  
Erected in the Abruzzi to his glory,  
Because of the great battle in which fell  
A Pagan King, according to the story,  
And felon people whom Charles sent to hell :  
And there are bones so many, and so many,  
Near them Giusaffa's would seem few, if any.

## VII.

But the world, blind and ignorant, don't prize  
His virtues as I wish to see them : thou,  
Florence, by his great bounty don't arise,  
And hast, and may have, if thou wilt allow,  
All proper customs and true courtesies :  
Whate'er thou hast acquired from then till now,  
With knightly courage, treasure, or the lance,  
Is sprung from out the noble blood of France.

## VIII.

Twelve Paladins had Charles in court, of whom  
The wisest and most famous was Orlando ;  
Him traitor Gan conducted to the tomb  
In Roncesvalles, as the villain plann'd too,  
While the horn rang so loud, and knell'd the doom  
Of their sad rout, though he did all knight can do,  
And Dante in his comedy has given  
To him a happy seat with Charles in heaven.

## IX.

'Twas Christmas-day ; in Paris all his court  
Charles held ; the chief, I say, Orlando was,  
The Dane ; Astolfo there too did resort,  
Also Ansuigi, the gay time to pass  
In festival and in triumphal sport,  
The much renown'd St. Dennis being the cause ;  
Angiolin of Bayonne, and Oliver,  
And gentle Belinghieri too came there :

## X.

Avolio, and Arino, and Othone  
Of Normandy, and Richard Paladin,  
Wise Hamo, and the ancient Salemone,  
Walter of Lion's Mount and Baldovin,  
Who was the son of the sad Ganellone,  
Were there, exciting too much gladness in  
The son of Pëpin :—when his knights came hither,  
He groaned with joy to see them altogether.

## XI.

But watchful Fortune lurking, takes good heed  
Ever some bar 'gainst our intents to bring.  
While Charles reposed him thus, in word and deed  
Orlando ruled court, Charles, and every thing ;  
Curst Gan, with envy bursting, had such need  
To vent his spite, that thus with Charles the king,  
One day he openly began to say,  
“ Orlando must we always then obey ?

## XII.

“ A thousand times I've been about to say,  
“ Orlando too presumptuously goes on ;  
“ Here are we, counts, kings, dukes, to own thy sway,  
“ Hamo, and Otho, Ogier, Solomon,  
“ Each have to honour thee and to obey ;  
“ But he has too much credit near the throne,  
“ Which we won't suffer, but are quite decided  
“ By such a boy to be no longer guided.

## XIII.

“ And even at Aspramont thou didst begin  
“ To let him know he was a gallant knight,  
“ And by the fount did much the day to win ;  
“ But I know *who* that day had won the fight  
“ If it had not for good Gherardo been :  
“ The victory was Almonte's else ; his sight  
“ He kept upon the standard, and the laurels  
“ In fact and fairness are his earning, Charles.

## XIV.

“ If thou rememberest being in Gascony,  
“ When there advanced the nations out of Spain,  
“ The Christian cause had suffer’d shamefully,  
“ Had not his valour driven them back again.  
“ Best speak the truth when there’s a reason why :  
“ Know then, oh Emperor ! that all complain :  
“ As for myself, I shall repress the mounts  
“ O’er which I cross’d with two and sixty Counts.

## XV.

“ ’Tis fit thy grandeur should dispense relief,  
“ So that each here may have his proper part,  
“ For the whole court is more or less in grief :  
“ Perhaps thou deem’st this lad a Mars in heart ?”  
Orlando one day heard this speech in brief,  
As by himself it chanced he sate apart :  
Displeased he was with Gan because he said it,  
But much more still that Charles should give him credit.

## XVI.

And with the sword he would have murder’d Gan,  
But Oliver thrust in between the pair,  
And from his hand extracted Durlindan,  
And thus at length they separated were.  
Orlando, angry too with Carloman,  
Wanted but little to have slain him there ;  
Then forth alone from Paris went the chief,  
And burst and madden’d with disdain and grief.

## XVII.

From Ermellina, consort of the Dane,  
He took Cortana, and then took Rondell,  
And on towards Brara prick'd him o'er the plain ;  
And when she saw him coming, Aldabelle  
Stretch'd forth her arms to clasp her lord again :  
Orlando, in whose brain all was not well,  
As " Welcome my Orlando home," she said,  
Rais'd up his sword to suite her on the head.

## XVIII.

Like him a fury counsels ; his revenge  
On Gau in that rash act he seem'd to take,  
Which Aldabella thought extremely strange,  
But soon Orlando found himself awake ;  
And his spouse took his bridle on this change,  
And he dismounted from his horse, and spake  
Of every thing which pass'd without demur,  
And then reposed himself some days with her.

## XIX.

Then full of wrath departed from the place,  
And far as Pagan countries roam'd astray,  
And while he rode, yet still at every pace  
The traitor Gau remember'd by the way ;  
And wandering on in error a long space  
An abbey which in a lone desert lay,  
'Midst glens obscure, and distant lands, he found,  
Which form'd the Christian's and the Pagan's bound.



## XX.

The abbot was call'd Clermont, and by blood  
Descended from Angrante : under cover  
Of a great mountain's brow the abbey stood,  
But certain savage giants look'd him over ;  
One Passamont was foremost of the brood,  
And Alabaster and Morgante hover  
Second and third, with certain slings, and throw  
In daily jeopardy the place below.

## XXI.

The monks could pass the convent gate no more,  
Nor leave their cells for water or for wood ;  
Orlando knock'd, but none would ope, before  
Unto the prior it at length seem'd good ;  
Enter'd, he said that he was taught to adore  
Him who was born of Mary's holiest blood,  
And was baptized a Christian ; and then show'd  
How to the abbey he had found his road.

## XXII.

Said the abbot, " You are welcome ; what is mine  
" We give you freely, since that you believe  
" With us in Mary Mother's Son divine ;  
" And that you may not, cavalier, conceive  
" The cause of our delay to let you in  
" To be rusticity, you shall receive  
" The reason why our gate was barr'd to you :  
" Thus those who in suspicion live must do.

## XXIII.

- “ When hither to inhabit first we came  
“ These mountains, albeit that they are obscure,  
“ As you perceive, yet without fear or blame  
“ They seem’d to promise an asylum sure :  
“ From savage brutes alone, too fierce to tame,  
“ ’Twas fit our quiet dwelling to secure ;  
“ But now, if here we’d stay, we needs must guard  
“ Against domestic beasts with watch and ward.

## XXIV.

- “ These make us stand, in fact, upon the watch.  
“ For late there have appear’d three giants rough ;  
“ What nation or what kingdom bore the batch  
“ I know not, but they are all of savage stuff ;  
“ When force and malice with some genius match,  
“ You know, they can do all—we are not enough :  
“ And these so much our orisons derange,  
“ I know not what to do, till matters change.

## XXV.

- “ Our ancient fathers living the desert in,  
“ For just and holy works were duly fed ;  
“ Think not they lived on locusts sole, ’tis certain  
“ That manna was rain’d down from heaven instead ;  
“ But here ’tis fit we keep on the alert in  
“ Our bounds, or taste the stones shower’d down for bread,  
“ From off yon mountain daily raining faster,  
“ And flung by Passamont and Alabaster.

## XXVI.

“ The third, Morgante, ’s savagest by far ; he  
“ Plucks up pines, beeches, poplar-trees, and oaks,  
“ And flings them, our community to bury,  
“ And all that I can do but more provokes.”

While thus they parley in the cemetery,

A stone from one of their gigantic strokes,  
Which nearly crush’d Rondell, came tumbling over,  
So that he took a long leap under cover.

## XXVII.

“ For God sake, cavalier, come in with speed,  
“ The manna’s falling now,” the abbot cried :  
“ This fellow does not wish my horse should feed,  
“ Dear abbot,” Roland unto him replied,  
“ Of restiveness he’d cure him had he need ;  
“ That stone seems with good-will and aim applied.  
The holy father said, “ I don’t deceive ;  
“ They’ll one day fling the mountain, I believe.”

## XXVIII.

Orlando bade them take care of Rondello,

And also made a breakfast of his own :

“ Abbot,” he said, “ I want to find that fellow

“ Who flung at my good horse yon corner-stone.”

Said the abbot, “ Let not my advice seem shallow,

“ As to a brother dear I speak alone ;

“ I would dissuade you, baron, from this strife,

“ As knowing sure that you will lose your life.

## XXIX.

“ That Passamont has in his hand three darts—  
“ Such slings, clubs, ballast-stones, that yield you must ;  
“ You know that giants have much stouter hearts  
“ Than us, with reason, in proportion just ;  
“ If go you will, guard well against their arts,  
“ For these are very barbarous and robust.”  
Orlando answer'd, “ This I'll see, be sure,  
“ And walk the wild on foot to be secure.”

## XXX.

The abbot sign'd the great cross on his front,  
“ Then go you with God's benison and mine :”  
Orlando, after he had scaled the mount,  
As the abbot had directed, kept the line  
Right to the usual haunt of Passamont ;  
Who, seeing him alone in this design,  
Survey'd him fore and aft with eyes observant,  
Then asked him, “ If he wish'd to stay as servant ?”

## XXXI.

And promised him an office of great ease.  
But, said Orlando, “ Saracen insane!  
“ I come to kill you, if it shall so please  
“ God, not to serve as footboy in your train ;  
“ You with his monks so oft have broke the peace—  
“ Vile dog ! 'tis past his patience to sustain.”  
The giant ran to fetch his arms, quite furious,  
When he received an answer so injurious.

## XXXII.

And being return'd to where Orlando stood,  
Who had not moved him from the spot, and swinging  
The cord, he hurl'd a stone with strength so rude,  
As show'd a sample of his skill in slinging;  
It roll'd on Count Orlando's helmet good  
And head, and set both head and helmet ringing,  
So that he swoon'd with pain as if he died,  
But more than dead, he seem'd so stupefied.

## XXXIII.

Then Passamont, who thought him slain outright,  
Said, " I will go, and while he lies along,  
" Disarm me : why such craven did I fight ?"  
But Christ his servants ne'er abandons long,  
Especially Orlando, such a knight,  
As to desert would almost be a wrong.  
While the giant goes to put off his defences,  
Orlando has recall'd his force and senses :

## XXXIV.

And loud he shouted, " Giant, where dost go ?  
" Thou thought'st me doubtless for the bier outlaid;  
" To the right about—without wings thou'rt too slow  
" To fly my vengeance—curish renegade !  
" 'Twas but by treachery thou laid'st me low."  
The giant his astonishment betray'd,  
And turn'd about, and stopp'd his journey on,  
And then he stoop'd to pick up a great stone.

## XXXV.

Orlando had Cortana bare in hand,  
 To split the head in twain was what he schem'd:—  
 Cortana ciave the skull like a true brand,  
 And Pagan Passamont died unredeem'd.  
 Yet harsh and haughty, as he lay he bann'd,  
 And most devoutly Macon still blasphemed;  
 But while his crude, rude blasphemies he heard,  
 Orlando thank'd the Father and the Word,—

## XXXVI.

Saying, “ What grace to me thou’st given !  
 “ And I to thee, Oh Lord ! am ever bound.  
 “ I know my life was saved by thee from heaven,  
 “ Since by the giant I was fairly down’d.  
 “ All things by thee are measured just and even ;  
 “ Our power without thine aid would nought be found :  
 “ I pray thee take heed of me, till I can  
 “ At least return once more to Carloman.”

## XXXVII.

And having said thus much, he went his way ;  
 And Alabaster he found out below,  
 Doing the very best that in him lay  
 To root from out a bank a rock or two.  
 Orlando, when he reach’d him, loud ’gan say,  
 “ How think’st thou, glutton, such a stone to throw ?”  
 When Alabaster heard his deep voice ring,  
 He suddenly betook him to his sling,

## XXXVIII.

And 'hurl'd a fragment of a size so large,  
That if it had in fact fulfill'd its mission,  
And Roland not avail'd him of his targe,  
There would have been no need of a physician.  
Orlando set himself in turn to charge,  
And in his bulky bosom made incision  
With all his sword. The lout fell; but, o'erthrown, he  
However by no means forgot Macone.

## XXXIX.

Morgante had a palace in his mode,  
Composed of branches, logs of wood, and earth,  
And stretch'd himself at ease in this abode,  
And shut himself at night within his birth.  
Orlando knock'd, and knock'd, again to goad  
The giant from his sleep; and he came forth,  
The door to open, like a crazy thing,  
For a rough dream had shook him slumbering.

## XL.

He thought that a fierce serpent had attack'd him,  
And Mahomet he call'd, but Mahomet  
Is nothing worth, and not an instant back'd him;  
But praying blessed Jesu, he was set  
At liberty from all the fears which rack'd him;  
And to the gate he came with great regret—  
“Who knocks here?” grumbling all the while, said he:  
“That,” said Orlando, “you will quickly see.”

## XLI.

- " I come to preach to you, as to your brothers,  
" Seht by the miserable monks—repentance;  
" For Providence divine, in you and others,  
" Condemns the evil done my new acquaintance.  
" 'Tis writ on high—your wrong must pay another's;  
" From heaven itself is issued out this sentence;  
" Know then, that colder now than a pilaster  
" I left your Passamont and Alabaster."

## XLII.

- Morgante said, " O gentle cavalier!  
" Now by thy God say me no villany;  
" The favour of your name I fain would hear,  
" And if a Christian, speak for courtesy."  
Replied Orlando, " So much to your ear  
" I by my faith disclose contentedly;  
" Christ I adore, who is the genuine Lord,  
" And, if you please, by you may be adored."

## XLIII.

- The Saracen rejoin'd in humble tone,  
" I have had an extraordinary vision;  
" A savage serpent fell on me alone,  
" And Macon would not pity my condition;  
" Hence to thy God, who for ye did atone  
" Upon the cross, preferr'd I my petition:  
" His timely succour set me safe and free,  
" And I a Christian am disposed to be."



## XLIV.

Orlando answer'd, " Baron just and pious,  
 " If this good wish your heart can really move  
 " To the true God, who will not then deny us  
 " Eternal honour, you will go above,  
 " And, if you please, as friends we will ally us,  
 " And I will love you with a perfect love.  
 " Your idols are vain liars full of fraud,  
 " The only true God is the Christian's God.

## XLV.

" The Lord descended to the virgin breast  
 " Of Mary Mother, sinless and divine ;  
 " If you acknowledge the Redeemer blest,  
 " Without whom neither sun nor star can shine,  
 " Abjure bad Macon's false and felon test,  
 " Your renegado God, and worship mine,—  
 " Baptize yourself with zeal, since you repent."  
 To which Morgante answer'd, " I'm content."

## XLVI.

And then Orlando to embrace him flew,  
 And made much of his convert, as he cried,  
 " To the abbot I will gladly marshal you :"  
 To whom Morgante, " Let us go," replied,  
 " I to the friars have for peace to sue."  
 Which thing Orlando heard with inward pride,  
 Saying, " My brother, so devout and good,  
 " Ask the abbot pardon, as I wish you would:

## XLVII.

“ Since, God has granted your illumination,  
 “ Accepting you in mercy for his own,  
 “ Humility should be your first oblation.”  
 Morgante said, “ For goodness’ sake make known—  
 “ Since that your God is to be mine—your station,  
 “ And let your name in verity be shown,  
 “ Then will I every thing at your command do.”  
 On which the other said, he was Orlando.

## XLVIII.

“ Then,” quoth the giant, “ blessed be Jesu,  
 “ A thousand times with gratitude and praise !  
 “ Oft, perfect Baron! have I heard of you  
 “ Through all the different periods of my days :  
 “ And, as I said, to be your vassal too  
 “ I wish, for your great gallantry always.”  
 Thus reasoning, they continued much to say,  
 And onwards to the abbey went their way. ✽

## XLIX.

And by the way, about the giants dead  
 Orlando with Morgante reasoned: “ Be,  
 “ For their decease, I pray you, comforted,  
 “ And, since it is God’s pleasure, pardon me.  
 “ A thousand wrongs unto the monks they bred,  
 “ And our true Scripture soundeth openly—  
 “ Good is rewarded, and chastised the ill,  
 “ Which the Lord never faileth to fulfil :

## L.

- “ Because his love of justice unto all  
“ Is such, he wills his judgment should devour  
“ All who have sin, however great or small ;  
“ But good he well remembers to restore :  
“ Nor without justice holy could we call  
“ Him, whom I now require you to adore :  
“ All men must make his will their wishes sway,  
“ And quickly and spontaneously obey.

## LI.

- “ And here our doctors are of one accord,  
“ Coming on this point to the same conclusion,—  
“ That in their thoughts who praise in heaven the Lord,  
“ If pity e’er was guilty of intrusion  
“ For their unfortunate relations stored  
“ In hell below, and damn’d in great confusion,—  
“ Their happiness would be reduced to nought,  
“ And thus unjust the Almighty’s self be thought.

## LII.

- “ But they in Christ have firmest hope, and all  
“ Which seems to him, to them too must appear  
“ Well done ; nor could it otherwise befall ;  
“ He never can in any purpose err :  
“ If sire or mother suffer endless thrall,  
“ They don’t disturb themselves for him or her ;  
“ What pleases God to them must joy inspire ;—  
“ Such is the observance of the eternal choir.”

## LIII.

" A word unto the wise," Morgante said,  
 " Is wont to be enough, and you shall see  
 " How much I grieve about my brethren dead;  
 " And if the will of God seem good to me,  
 " Just, as you tell me, 'tis in heav'n obey'd—  
 " Ashes to ashes,—merry let us be!  
 " I will cut off the hands from both their trunks,  
 " And carry them unto the holy monks.

## LIV.

" So that all persons may be sure and certain  
 " That they are dead, and have no farther fear  
 " To wander solitary this desert in,  
 " And that they may perceive my spirit clear  
 " By the Lord's grace, who hath withdrawn the curtain  
 " Of darkness, making his bright realm appear."  
 He cut his brethren's hands off at these words,  
 And left them to the savage beasts and birds.

## LV.

Then to the abbey they went on together,  
 Where waited them the abbot in great doubt.  
 The monks, who knew not yet the fact, ran thither  
 To their superior, all in breathless rout,  
 Saying, with tremor, " Please to tell us whether  
 " You wish to have this person in or out ?"  
 The abbot, looking through upon the giant,  
 Too greatly fear'd, at first, to be compliant.

## LVI.

Orlando, seeing him thus agitated,  
Said quickly, " Abbot, be thou of good cheer;  
" He Christ believes, as Christian must be rated,  
" And hath renounced his Macon false;" which here  
Morgante with the hands corroborated,  
A proof of both the giants' fate quite clear :  
Thence, with due thanks, the abbot God adored,  
Saying, " Thou hast contented me, oh Lord!"

## LVII.

He gazed ; Morgante's height he calculated,  
And more than once contemplated his size ;  
And then he said, " Oh giant celebrated,  
" Know, that no more my wonder will arise,  
" How you could tear and fling the trees you late did,  
" When I behold your form with my own eyes.  
" You now a true and perfect friend will show  
" Yourself to Christ, as once you were a foe.

## LVIII.

" And one of our apostles, Saul once named,  
" Long persecuted sore the faith of Christ,  
" Till one day by the Spirit being inflamed,  
" " Why dost thou persecute me thus?" said Christ ;  
" And then from his offence he was reclaimed,  
" And went for ever after preaching Christ ;  
" And of the faith became a trump, whose sounding  
" O'er the whole earth is echoing and rebounding.

## LIX.

“ So, my Morgante, you may do likewise ;  
“ He who repents, thus writes the Evangelist,—  
“ Occasions more rejoicing in the skies  
“ Than ninety-nine of the celestial list.  
“ You may be sure, should each desire arise  
“ With just zeal for the Lord, that you’ll exist  
“ Among the happy saints for evermore ;  
“ But you were lost and damn’d to hell before !”

## LX.

And thus great honour to Morgante paid  
The abbot : many days they did repose.  
One day, as with Orlando they both stray’d,  
And saunter’d here and there, where’er they chose.  
The abbot show’d a chamber, where array’d  
Much armour was, and hung up certain bows ;  
And one of these Morgante for a whim  
Girt on, though useless, he believ’d, to him.

## LXI.

There being a want of water in the place,  
Orlando, like a worthy brother, said,  
“ Morgante, I could wish you in this case  
“ To go for water.” “ You shall be obey’d  
“ In all commands,” was the reply, “ straightways.”  
Upon his shoulder a great tub he laid,  
And went out on his way unto a fountain,  
Where he was wont to drink below the mountain.

## LXII.

Arrived there, a prodigious noise he hears,  
 Which suddenly along the forest spread ;  
 Whereat from out his quiver he prepares  
 An arrow for his bow, and lifts his head ;  
 And lo ! a monstrous herd of swine appears,  
 And onward rushes with tempestuous tread,  
 And to the fountain's brink precisely pours,  
 So that the giant's join'd by all the boars.

## LXIII.

Morgante at a venture shot an arrow,  
 Which pierced a pig precisely in the ear,  
 And pass'd unto the other side quite thorough,  
 So that the boar, defunct, lay tripp'd up near.  
 Another, to revenge his fellow farrow,  
 Against the giant rush'd in fierce career,  
 And reach'd the passage with so swift a foot,  
 Morgante was not now in time to shoot.

## LXIV.

Perceiving that the pig was on him close,  
 He gave him such a punch upon the head \*

" \* Gli dette in sulla testa un gran punzone." It is strange that Pulci should have literally anticipated the technical terms of my old friend and master Jackson, and the art which he has carried to its highest pitch. "*A punch on the head*," "*or a punch in the head*," "*un punzone in sulla testa*," is the exact and frequent phrase of our best pugilists, who little dream that they are talking the purest Tuscan.

As floor'd him, so that he no more arose—  
Smashing the very bone ; and he fell dead  
Next to the other. Having seen such blows,  
The other pigs along the valley fled ;  
Morgante on his neck the bucket took,  
Full from the spring, which neither swerved nor shook.

## LXV.

The tou was on one shoulder, and there were  
The hogs on t'other, and he brush'd apace  
On to the abbey, though by no means near,  
Nor spilt one drop of water in his race.  
Orlando, seeing him so soon appear  
With the dead boars, and with that brimful vase,  
Marvell'd to see his strength so very great ;—  
So did the abbot, and set wide the gate.

## LXVI.

The monks, who saw the water fresh and good,  
Rejoiced, but much more to perceive the pork ;—  
All animals are glad at sight of food :  
They lay their breviaries to sleep, and work  
With greedy pleasure, and in such a mood,  
That the flesh needs no salt beneath their fork.  
Of rankness and of rot there is no fear,  
For all the fasts are now left in arrears.



## LXVII.

As though they wish'd to burst at once, they ate;  
And gorged so that, as if the bones had been  
In water, sorely grieved the dog and cat,  
Perceiving that they all were pick'd too clean.  
The abbot, who to all did honour great,  
A few days after this convivial scene,  
Gave to Morgante a fine horse well train'd,  
Which he long time had for himself maintain'd.

## LXVIII.

The horse Morgante to a meadow led,  
To gallop, and to put him to the proof,  
Thinking that he a back of iron had,  
Or to skim eggs unbroke was light enough;  
But the horse, sinking with the pain, fell dead,  
And burst, while cold on earth lay head and hoof.  
Morgante said, "Get up, thou sulky cur!"  
And still continued pricking with the spur.

## LXIX.

But finally he thought fit to dismount,  
And said, "I am as light as any feather,  
"And he has burst—to this what say you, Count?"  
Orlando answered, "Like a ship's mast rather  
"You seem to me, and with the truck for front:—  
"Let him go; Fortune wills that we together  
"Should march, but you on foot, Morgante still."  
To which the giant answered, "So I will.

## LXX.

“ When there shall be occasion, you will see  
“ How I approve my courage in the fight.”  
Orlando said, “ I really think you’ll be,  
“ If it should prove God’s will, a goodly knight,  
“ Nor will you napping there discover me :  
“ But never mind your horse, though out of sight  
“ ’Twere best to carry him into some wood,  
“ If but the means or way I understood.”

## LXXI.

The giant said, “ Then carry him I will,  
“ Since that to carry me he was so slack—  
“ To render, as the gods do, good for ill ;  
“ But lend a hand to place him on my back.”  
Orlando answer’d, “ If my counsel still  
“ May weigh, Morgante, do not undertake  
“ To lift or carry this dead courser, who,  
“ As you have done to him, will do to you.

## LXXII.

“ Take care he don’t revenge himself, though dead,  
“ As Nessus did of old beyond all cure ;  
“ I don’t know if the fact you’ve heard or read,  
“ But he will make you burst, you may be sure.”  
“ But help him on my back,” Morgante said,  
“ And you shall see what weight I can endure :  
“ In place, my gentle Roland, of this palfrey,  
“ With all the bells, I’d carry yonder belfry.”

## LXXIII.

The abbot said, "The steeple may do well,  
"But, for the bells, you've broken them, I wot."  
Morgante answered, "Let them pay in hell  
"The penalty, who lie dead in yon grot;"  
And hoisting up the horse from where he fell,  
He said, "Now look if I the gout have got,  
"Orlando, in the legs—or if I have force;"—  
And then he made two gambols with the horse.

## LXXIV.

Morgante was like any mountain framed;  
So if he did this, 'tis no prodigy;  
But secretly himself Orlando blamed,  
Because he was one of his family;  
And fearing that he might be hurt or main'd,  
Once more he bade him lay his burthen by:  
"Put down, nor bear him further the desert in."  
Morgante said, "I'll carry him for certain."

## LXXV.

He did; and stow'd him in some nook away,  
And to the abbey then return'd with speed.  
Orlando said, "Why longer do we stay?"  
"Morgante, here is nought to do indeed."  
The abbot by the hand he took one day,  
And said with great respect, he had agreed  
To leave his reverence; but for this decision  
He wish'd to have his pardon and permission.

## LXXVI.

The honours they continued to receive

Perhaps exceeded what his merits claim'd :

He said, " I mean, and quickly, to retrieve

" The lost days of time past, which may be blam'd ;

" Some days ago I should have ask'd your leave,

" Kind father, but I really was ashamed,

" And know not how to show my sentiment,

" So much I see you with our stay content.

## LXXVII.

" But in my heart I bear through every clime,

" The abbot, abbey, and this solitude—

" So much I love you in so short a time ;

" For me, from heaven reward you with all good,

" The God so true, the eternal Lord sublime !

" Whose kingdom at the last hath open stood :

" Meanwhile we stand expectant of your blessing,

" And recommend us to your prayers with pressing."

## LXXVIII.

Now when the abbot Count Orlando heard,

His heart grew soft with inner tenderness,

Such fervour in his bosom bred each word ;

And, " Cavalier," he said, " if I have less

" Courteous and kind to your great worth appear'd,

" Than fits me for such gentle blood to express,

" I know I've done too little in this case ;

" But blame our ignorance, and this poor place.

## LXXIX.

- “ We can indeed but honour you with masses,  
“ And sermons, thanksgivings, and pater-nosters  
“ Hot suppers, dinners (fitting other places  
“ In verity much rather than the cloisters ;)  
“ But such a love for you my heart embraces,  
“ For thousand virtues which your bosom fosters,  
“ That wheresoe’er you go, I too shall be,  
“ And, on the other part, you rest with me.

## LXXX.

- “ This may involve a seeming contradiction,  
“ But you I know are sage, and feel, and taste,  
“ And understand my speech with full conviction.  
“ For your just pious deeds may you be graced  
“ With the Lord’s great reward and benediction,  
“ By whom you were directed to this waste :  
“ To his high mercy is our freedom due,  
“ For which we render thanks to him and you.

## LXXXI.

- “ You saved at once our life and soul : such fear  
“ The giants caused us, that the way was lost  
“ By which we could pursue a fit career  
“ In search of Jesus and the saintly host ;  
“ And your departure breeds such sorrow here,  
“ That comfortless we all are to our cost ;  
“ But months and years you could not stay in sloth,  
“ Nor are you form’d to wear our sober cloth ;

## LXXXII.

“ But to bear arms and wield the lance ; indeed,  
“ With these as much is done as with this cowl,  
“ In proof of which the Scripture you may read.  
“ This giant up to heaven may bear his soul  
“ By your compassion : now in peace proceed.  
“ Your state and name I seek not to unroll,  
“ But, if I’m ask’d, this answer shall be given,  
“ That here an angel was sent down from heaven.

## LXXXIII.

“ If you want armour or aught else, go in,  
“ Look o’er the wardrobe, and take what you choose,  
“ And cover with it o’er this giant’s skin.”  
Orlando answered, “ If there should lie loose  
“ Some armour, ere our journey we begin,  
“ Which might be turn’d to my companion’s use,  
“ The gift would be acceptable to me.”  
The abbot said to him, “ Come in and see.”

## LXXXIV.

And in a certain closet, where the wall  
Was cover’d with old armour like a crust,  
The abbot said to them, “ I give you all.”  
Morgante rummaged piecemeal from the dust  
The whole, which, save one cuirass, was too small,  
And that too had the mail inlaid with rust.  
They wonder’d how it fitted him exactly,  
Which ne’er has suited others so compactly.

## LXXXV.

'Twas an immeasurable giant's, who  
By the great Milo of Agrante fell  
Before the abbey many years ago.

The story on the wall was figured well ;  
In the last moment of the abbey's foe,

Who long had waged a war implacable :  
Precisely as the war occur'd they drew him,  
And there was Milo as he overthrew him.

## LXXXVI.

Seeing this history, Count Orlando said

In his own heart, " Oh God ! who in the sky  
" Know'st all things, how was Milo hither led ?

" Who caused the giant in this place to die ?"  
And certain letters, weeping, then he read,

So that he could not keep his visage dry,—  
As I will tell in the ensuing story.  
From evil keep you the high King of Glory!

## IL MORGANTE MAGGIORE.

### CANTO PRIMO.

---

#### I.

IN principio era il Verbo appresso a Dio,  
Ed era Iddio il Verbo, e'l Verbo lui :  
Questo era nel principio al parer mio ;  
E nulla si può far senza costui :  
Però, giusto Signor benigno e pio,  
Mandami solo un de gli angeli tui,  
Che m'accompagni, e rechimi a memoria  
Una famosa antica e degna storia

#### II.

E tu Vergine figlia e madre e sposa  
Di quel Signor che ti dette le chiave  
Del cielo e de l'abisso e d'ogni cosa  
Quel dì che Gabriel tuo ti disse ave :  
Perchè tu se' de' tuo' servi pietosa,  
Con dolce rime e stil grato e soave  
Ajuta i versi miei benignamente,  
E'nfin al fine illumina la mente.

#### III.

Era nel tempo quando Filomena  
Con la sorella si lamenta e plora,  
Che si ricorda di sua antica pena,  
E pé boschetti le nimfe innamora,



E Febo il carro temperato mena,  
 Che 'l suo Fetonte l'ammaestra ancora ;  
 Ed appariva appunto a l'orizzonte,  
 Tal che Titon si graffiava la fronte.

## IV.

Quand'io varai la mia barchetta, prima  
 Per ubbidir chi sempre ubbidir debbe  
 La mente, e faticarsi in prosa e in rima,  
 E del mio Carlo imperador m'incerebbe ;  
 Che so quanti la penna ha posto in cima,  
 Che tutti la sua gloria prevarrebbe :  
 E stata quella istoria, a quel ch' i' veggio,  
 Di Carlo male intesa e scritta peggio.

## V.

Diceva già Lionardo Aretino,  
 Che s'egli avesse avuto scrittor degno,  
 Com'egli ebbe un Ormanno il suo Pipino  
 Ch'avesse diligenza avuto e ingegno ;  
 Sarebbe Carlo Magno un uom divino ;  
 Però ch'egli ebbe gran vittoria e regno,  
 E fece per la chiesa e për la fede  
 Certo assai più che non si dice o crede.

## VI.

Guardasi ancora a san Liberatore  
 Quella badia là presso a Manoppello,  
 Già ne gli Abbruzzi fatta per suo onore,  
 Dove fu la battaglia e'l gran flaggello  
 D'un re pagan, che Carlo imperadore  
 Uccise, e tanto del suo popol fello :  
 E vedesi tante ossa, e tanto il sanno,  
 Che tutte in Giusaffà poi si vedranno.

## VII.

Ma il mondo cieco e ignorante non prezza  
\*Le sue virtù, com'io vorrei vedere :  
E tu, Fiorenza, de la sua grandezza  
Possiedi, e sempre potrai possedere  
Ogni costume ed ogni gentilezza  
Che si potesse aquistare o avere  
Col senno col tesoro o con la lancia  
Dal nobil sangue e venuto di Francia.

## VIII.

Dodici paladini aveva in corte  
Carlo ; e'l più savio e famoso era Orlando :  
Gran traditor lo condusse a la morte  
In Roncisvalle un trattato ordinando ;  
Là dove il corno sonò tanto forte  
Dopo la dolorosa rotta, quando  
Ne la sua commedia Dante qui dice,  
E mettelo con Carlo in ciel felice.

## IX

Era per pasqua quella di natale :  
Carlo la corte avea tutta in Parigi .  
Orlando, com'io dico, il principale  
Evvi, il Danese, Astolfo, e Ansuigi .  
Fannosi feste e cose trionfale,  
E molto celebravan San Dionigi ;  
Angiolin di Bajona, ed Ulivieri  
V'era venuto, e'l gentil Berlinghieri.

## X.

Eravi Avolio ed Avino ed Ottone,  
Di Normandia, Riccardo paladino,  
E'l savio Namo, e'l vecchio Salamone,  
Gualtier da Montione, e Baldovino

Ch'era figliuol del tristo Ganellone.  
 Troppo lieto era il figliuol di Pipino ;  
 Tanto chè spesso d'allegrezza geme  
 Veggendo tutti i paladini insieme.

## XI.

Ma la fortuna attenta sta nascosa,  
 Per guastar sempre ciascun nostro effetto ;  
 Mentre che Carlo così si riposa,  
 Orlando governava in fatto e in detto  
 La corte e Carlo Magno ed ogni cosa :  
 Gan per invidia scoppia il maladetto,  
 E cominciava un dì con Carlo a dire :  
 Abbiam sempre noi Orlando ad ubbidire ?

## XII.

Io ho creduto mille volte dirti :  
 Orlando ha in se troppa presunzione :  
 Noi siam qui conti, re, duchi a servirti,  
 E Namò, Ottone, Uggieri e Salamone,  
 Per onorarti ognun, per ubbidirti :  
 Che costui abbi ogni reputazione  
 Nol soffrirem ; ma siam deliberati  
 Da un fanciullo non esser governati.

## XIII.

Tu cominciasti insino in Aspramonte  
 A dargli a intender che fusse gagliardo,  
 E facesse gran cose a quella fonte ;  
 Ma se non fusse stato il buon Gherardo,  
 Io so che la vittoria era d'Almonte :  
 Ma egli ebbe sempre l'occhio a lo stendardo :  
 Che si voleva quel dì coronarlo :  
 Questo è colui ch'ha meritato, Carlo.

## XIV.

Se ti ricorda già sendo in Guascogna,  
Quando e' vi venne la gente di Spagna,  
Il popol de' cristiani avea vergogna,  
Se non mostrava la sua forza magna.  
Il ver convien pur dir, quando e'bisogna :  
Sappi ch'ognuno imperador si lagna :  
Quant'io per me, ripasserò que' monti  
Ch'io passai'n qua con sessantaduo conti.

## XV.

La tua grandezza dispensar si vuole,  
E far che ciascun abbi la sua parte :  
La corte tutta quanta se ne duole :  
Tu credi che costui sia forse Marte ?  
Orlando un giorno udì queste parole,  
Che si sedeva soletto in disparte :  
Dispiacquegli di Gan quel che diceva ;  
E molto più che Carlo gli credeva.

## XVI.

E volle con la spada uccider Gano ;  
Ma Ulivieri in quel mezzo si mise,  
E Durlindana gli trasse di mano,  
E così il me' che seppe gli divise.  
Orlando si sdegnò con Carlo Mano,  
E poco men che quivi non l'uccise ;  
E dipartissi di Parigi solo,  
E scoppia e'mpazza di sdegno e di duolo.

## XVII.

Ad Ermellina moglie del Danese  
Tolse Cortana, e poi tolse Rondello ;  
E'n verso Brava il suo cammin poi prese.  
Alda la bella come vide quello,

Per abbracciarlo le braccia distese.  
 Orlando, che ismarrito avea il cervello,  
 Com'ella disse . ben venga il mio Orlando :  
 Gli volle in su la testa dar col brando.

## XVIII.

Come colui che la furia consiglia,  
 Egli pareva a Gan dar veramente :  
 Alda la bella si fè maraviglia :  
 Orlando si ravvide prestamente :  
 E la sua sposa pigliava la briglia,  
 E scese dal caval subitamente :  
 Ed ogni cosa narrava a costei,  
 E ripososi alcun giorno con lei.

## XIX.

Poi si partì portato dal furore,  
 E terminò passare in Paganía ;  
 E mentre che cavalca, il traditore  
 Di Gan sempre ricorda per la via :  
 E cavalcando d'uno in altro errore,  
 In un deserto truova una badía  
 In luoghi oscuri e paesi lontani,  
 Ch'era a' confin' tra cristiani e pagani.

## XX.

L'abate si chiamava Chiaramonte,  
 Era del sangue disceso d'Anglante :  
 Di sopra a la badía v'era un gran monte,  
 Dove abitava alcun fiero gigante,  
 De'quali uno avea nome Passamonte,  
 L'altre Alabastro, e'l terzo era Morgante :  
 Con certe frombe gittavan da alto,  
 Ed ogni dì facevan qualche assalto.

## XXI.

I monachetti non potieno uscire  
Del monistero o per legne o per acque :  
Orlando picchia, e non volieno aprire,  
Fin che a l'abate a la fine pur piacque ;  
Entrato drento cominciava a dire,  
Come colui, che di Maria già nacque,  
Adora, ed era cristian battezzato,  
E com'egli era a la badia arrivato.

## XXII.

Disse l'abate il ben venuto sia :  
Di quel ch'io ho volentier ti daremo,  
Poi che tu credi al figliuol di Maria ;  
E la cagion, cavalier, ti diremo,  
Acciò che non l'imputi a villania,  
Perchè a l'entrar resistenza facemo,  
E non ti volle aprir quel monachetto :  
Così intervien chi vive con sospetto.

## XXIII.

Quando ci venni al principio abitare  
Queste montagne, benchè sieno oscure  
Come tu vedi ; pur si potea stare  
Sanza sospetto, ch' ell' eran sicure .  
Sol de le fiere t'avevi a guardare ;  
Fernoci spesso di brutte paure ;  
Or ci bisogna, se vogliamo starci,  
Da le bestie domestiche guardarci.

## XXIV.

Queste ci fan piuttosto stare a segno  
Sonci appariti tre fieri giganti,  
Non so di qual paese o di qual regno,  
Ma molto son feroci tutti quanti :

La forza e'l malvoler giunt'a lo'ngegno  
 Sai che può'l tutto; e noi non siam bastanti;  
 Questi perturban sì l'orazion nostra,  
 Che non so più che far, s'altri nol mostra.

## XXV.

Gli antichi padri nostri nel deserto,  
 Se le lor opre sante erano e giuste,  
 Del ben servir da Dio n'avean buon merito;  
 Nè creder sol vivessin di locuste  
 Piòvea dal ciel la manna, questo è certo;  
 Ma qui convien che spesso assaggi e gusti  
 Sassi che piovon di sopra quel monte,  
 Che gettano Alabastro e Passamonte.

## XXVI.

E'l terzo ch'è Morgante, assai più fiero,  
 Isveglie e pini e faggi e certi e gli oppi,  
 E gettagli infin qui: questo è pur vero;  
 Non posso far che d'ira non iscoppi.  
 Mentre che parlan così in cimitero,  
 Un sasso par che Rondel quasi sgroppi;  
 Che da' giganti giù venne da alto  
 Tanto, ch'e' prese sotto il tetto un salto.

## XXVII.

Tirati drento, cavalier, per Dio,  
 Disse l'abate, che la manna casca.  
 Risponde Orlando: caro abate mio,  
 Costui non vuol che'l mio caval più pasca;  
 Veggo che lo guarrebbe del restio:  
 Quel sasso par che di buon braccio nasca.  
 Rispose il santo padre: io non t'inganno,  
 Credo che'l monte un giorno gitteranno.

## XXVIII.

Orlando governar fece Rondello,  
E ordinar per se la colazione :  
Poi disse : abate, io voglio andare a quello  
Che dette al mio caval con quel cantone.  
Disse l'abate : come car' fratello  
Consiglierotti senza passione ?  
Io ti sconforto, baron, di tal gita ;  
Ch'io so che tu vi lascerai la vita.

## XXIX.

Quel Passamonte porta in man tre dardi :  
Chi frombe, chi baston, chi mazzafrusti ;  
Sai che giganti più di noi gagliardi  
Son per ragion, che son anco più giusti ;  
E pur se vuoi andar fa che ti guardi,  
Che questi son villan' molto e robusti.  
Rispose Orlando : io lo vedrò per certo ;  
Ed avviossi a piè su pel deserto.

## XXX.

Disse l'abate col segnarlo in fronte :  
Va, che da Dio e me sia benedetto.  
Orlando, poi che salito ebbe il monte.  
Si dirizzò, come l'abate detto  
Gli aveva, dove sta quel Passamonte ;  
Il quale Orlando veggendo soletto,  
Molto lo squadra di dietro e davante ;  
Poi domandò, se star volea per fante.

## XXXI.

E' prometteva di farlo godere.  
Orlando disse : pazzo saracino,  
Io vengo a te, com'è di Dio volere,  
Per darti morte e non per ragazzino ;



A' monaci suoi fatto hai dispiacere;  
 Non può più comportarti can mastino.  
 Questo gigante armar si corse a furia,  
 Quando sentì ch'egli diceva ingiuria,

## XXXII.

E ritornato ove aspettava Orlando,  
 Il qual non s'era partito da bomba;  
 Subito venne la cordia girando,  
 E lascia un sasso andar fuor de la fiomba,  
 Che in su la testa giugnea rotolando  
 Al conte Orlando, e l'elmetto rimbomba;  
 E cadde per la pena tramortito;  
 Ma più che morto par, tanto è stordito.

## XXXIII.

Passamonte pensò che fusse morto,  
 E disse: io voglio andarmi a disarmare;  
 Questo poltron per chi m'aveva scorto?  
 Ma Cristo i suoi non suole abbandonare,  
 Massime Orlando, ch'egli avrebbe il torto.  
 Mentre il gigante l'arme va a spogliare,  
 Orlando in questo tempo si risente,  
 E rievocava e la forza e la mente.

## XXXIV.

E gridò forte: gigante, ove vai?  
 Ben ti pensasti d'avermi ammazzato!  
 Volgiti a dietro, che, s'ale non hai,  
 Non puoi da me fuggir, can rinnegato:  
 A tradimento ingiuriato m'hai.  
 Donde il gigante allor maravigliato  
 Si volse a dietro, e riteneva il passo;  
 Poi si chinò per tor di terra un sasso.

## XXXV. '.

Orlando avea Cortana ignuda in mano ;  
Trasse a la testa : e Cortana tagliava :  
Per mezzo il teschio partì del pagano,  
E Passamonte morto rovinava :  
E nel cadere il superbo e villano  
Divotamente Macon bestemmiava ;  
Ma mentre che bestemmia il crudo e acerbo,  
Orlando ringraziava il Padre e'l Verbo.

## XXXVI.

Dicendo : quanta grazia oggi m'ha data '  
Sempre ti sono, o signor mio, tenuto ;  
Per te conosco la vita salvata ;  
Però che dal gigante era abbattuto .  
Ogni cosa a ragion fai misurata ;  
Non val nestro poter senza il tuo ajuto.  
Priegoti, sopra me tenga la mano,  
Tanto che ancor ritorni a Carlo Mano

## XXXVII.

Poi ch'ebbe questo detto s'andòe,  
Tanto che trova Alabastro più basso  
Che si sforzava, quando e'lo trovòe,  
Di sveglia d'una ripa fuori un masso.  
Orlando, com'e' giunse a quel, gridòe :  
Che pensi tu, ghiotton, gittar quel sasso ?  
Quando Alabastro questo grido intende,  
Subitamente la sua fromba prende.

## XXXVIII.

E'trasse d'una pietra molto grossa,  
Tanto ch'Orlando bisognò schermisse ;  
Che se l'avesse giunto la percossa,  
Non bisognava il medico venisse .

Orlando adoperò poi la sua possa ;  
 Nel pettignon tutta la spada misse :  
 E morto cadde questo badalone,  
 E non dimenticò però Macone.

## XXXIX.

Morgante aveva al suo modo un palagio  
 Fatto di frasche e di schegge e di terra :  
 Quivi, secondo lui, si posa ad agio ;  
 Quivi la notte si rinchiede e serra.  
 Orlando picchia, e daragli disagio,  
 Perchè il gigante dal sonno si sfera ;  
 Venne gli aprir come una cosa matta ;  
 Ch'un' aspra visione aveva fatta.

## XL.

E'gli pareva ch'un feroce serpente  
 L'avea assalito, e chiamar Macometto ;  
 Ma Macometto non valea niente :  
 Ond'e' chiamava Gesù benedetto ;  
 E liberato l'avea finalmente.  
 Venne a la porta, ed ebbe così detto ;  
 Chi buzza qua ? pur sempre borbottando.  
 Tu il saprai tosto gli rispose Orlando.

## XLI.

Vengo per fatti, come a'tuo' fratelli,  
 Far de' peccati tuoi la penitènzia,  
 Da' monaci mandato, cattivelli,  
 Come stato è divina providenzia ;  
 Pel mal ch'avete fatto a torto a quelli,  
 E dato in ciel così questa sentenza ;  
 Sappi, che freddo già più ch'un pilastro  
 Lasciato ho Passamonte e'l tuo Alabastro,

## XLII.

Disse Morgante : o gentil cavaliere,  
Per lo tuo Dio non mi dir villania :  
Di grazia il nome tuo vorrei sapere ;  
Se se' cristian, deh dillo in cortesia.  
Rispose Orlando : di cotal mastiere  
Contenterotti per la fede mia :  
Adoro Cristo, ch'è Signor verace ;  
E puoi tu adorarlo, se ti piace.

## XLIII.

Rispose il saracin con umil voce :  
Io ho fatto una strana visione,  
Che m'assaliva un serpente feroce :  
Non mi valeva per chiamar Macone ;  
Onde al tuo Dio che fu confitto in croce  
Rivolsi presto la mia intenzione :  
E' mi soccorse, e fui libero e sano,  
E son disposto al tutto esser cristiano.

## XLIV..

Rispose Orlando : baron giusto e pio,  
Se questo buon voler terrai nel core,  
L'anima tua arà quel vero Dio  
Che ci può sol gradir d'eterno onore :  
E s'tu vorrai, sarai compagno mio,  
E amerotti con perfetto amore :  
Gl'idoli vostri son bugiardi e vani :  
Il vero Dio è lo Dio de' cristiani

## XLV.

Venne questo Signor senza peccato.  
Ne la sua madre vergine pulzella :  
Se conoscessi quel Signor beato,  
Sanza'l qual non risplende sole o stella,

Aresti già Mac<sup>da</sup> tuo rinnegato,  
 E la sua fede iniqua ingiusta e fella :  
 Battezzati al mio Dio di buon talento.  
 Morgante gli rispose : io son contento.

## XLVI.

E corse Orlando subito abbracciare :  
 Orlando gran carezze gli facea,  
 E disse : a la badia ti vo' menare.  
 Morgante, andianci presto, rispondea :  
 Co'monaci la pace si vuol fare.  
 De la qual cosa Orlando in se godea,  
 Dicendo ; fratel mio\*divoto e buono,  
 Io vò che chiegga a l'abate perdono.

## XLVII.

Da poi che Dio ralluminato t'ha,  
 Ed accettato per la sua umiltade;  
 Vuolsi che tu ancor usi umiltà.  
 Disse Morgante : per la tua bontade,  
 Poi che il tuo Dio mio sempre onni sarà,  
 Dimmi del nome tuo la veritade,  
 Poi di me dispor puoi al tuo comando ;  
 Ond'e' gli disse, com'egli era Orlando.

## XLVIII.

Disse il gigante : Gesù benedetto  
 Per mille volte ringraziato sia ;  
 Sentito t'ho nomar, baron perfetto,  
 Per tutti i tempi de la vita mia :  
 E, com'io dissi, sempremai soggetto  
 Esser ti vo' per la tua gagliardia.  
 Insieme molte cose ragionarò,  
 E'n verso la badia poi s'inviarò.

## XLIX.

E per la via de que'giganti morti :  
Orlando con Morgante sì ragiona ·  
De' la lor morte vo'che ti conforti ;  
E poi che piace a Dio, a me perdona ;  
A' monaci avean fatto mille torti ;  
E la nostra scrittura aperto suona  
Il ben remunerato, e'l mal punito ;  
E mai non ha questo Signor fallito,

## L.

Però ch'egli ama la giustizia tanto,  
Che vuol, che sempre il suo giudicio inorda  
Ognun ch'abbi peccato tanto o quanto ;  
E così il ben ristorar si ricorda ·  
E non saria senza giustizia santo :  
Adunque al suo voler presto t'accorda :  
Che debbe ognun voler quel che vuol questo,  
Ed accordarsi volentieri e presto.

## LI.

E sonsi i nostri dottori accordati,  
Pigliando tutti una conclusione,  
Che que' che son nel ciel glorificati,  
S'avessin nel pensier compassione  
De' miseri parenti, che dannati  
Son ne lo inferno in gran confusione,  
La lor felicità nulla sarebbe ;  
E vedi che qui ingiusto Iddio parrebbe.

## LII.

Ma egli anno posto in Gesù ferma spene ;  
E tanto pare a lor, quanto a lui pare ;  
Afferman ciò ch'e'fa, che facci bene,  
E che non possi in nessun modo errare :

Se padre o madre è ne l'eternè pene,  
 Di questo non si posson conturbare :  
 Che quel che piace a Dio, sol piace a loro :  
 Questo s'osserva ne l'eterno coro.

## LIII.

Al savio suol bastar poche parole,  
 Disse Morgante ; tu il potrai vedere,  
 De' miei fratelli, Orlando, se mi duole,  
 E s' io m'accorderò di Dio al volere,  
 Come tu di' che in ciel servir si suole :  
 Morti co' morti ; or pensiam di godere ;  
 Io vo tagliar le mani a tutti quanti,  
 E porterolle a que' monaci santi,

## LIV.

Acciò ch'ognun sia più sicuro e certo,  
 Com' e' son morti, e non abbin paura  
 Andar soletti per questo deserto ;  
 E perchè veggan la mia mente pura  
 A quel Signor che m'ha il suo regno aperto,  
 E tratto fuor di tenebre sì oscura.  
 E poi tagliò le mani a' due fratelli,  
 E lasciagli a le fiere ed agli uccelli.

## LV.

A la badia insieme se ne vanno,  
 Ove l'abate assai dubbioso aspetta :  
 I monaci che'l fatto ancor non sanno,  
 Correvano a l'abate tutti in fretta,  
 Dicendo paurosi e pien' d'affanno :  
 Volete voi costui drento si metta ?  
 Quando l'abate vedeva il gigante,  
 Si turbò tutto nel primo sembante.

## LVI.

Orlando che turbato così il vede,  
'Gli disse presto : abate, datti pace,  
Questo è cristiano, e in Cristo nostro crede,  
E rinnegato ha il suo Macon fallace.  
Morgante i moncherin' mostrò per fede,  
Come i giganti ciascun morto giace ;  
Donde l'abate ringraziava Iddio,  
Dicendo : or m'hai contento, Signor mio.

## LVII.

E riguardava, e squadrava Morgante,  
La sua grandezza e una volta e due,  
E poi gli disse : O famoso gigante,  
Sappi ch'io non mi maraviglio piùè,  
Che tu svegliessi e gittassi le piante,  
Quand'io riguardo or le fattezze tue :  
T'u sarai or perfetto e vero amico  
A Cristo, quanto tu gli eri nimico.

## LVIII.

Un nostro apostol, Saul già chiamato,  
Perseguì molto la fede di Cristo :  
Un giorno poi da lo spirito infiammato,  
Perchè pur mi persegui ? disse Cristo :  
E'si ravvide allor del suo peccato : —  
Andò poi predicando sempre Cristo ;  
E fatto è or de la fede una tromba,  
La qual per tutto risuona e rimbomba.

## LIX.

Così farai tu ancor, Morgante mio :  
E chi s'emenda, è scritto nel vangelo, '  
Che maggior festa fa d'un solo Iddio,  
Che di novantanove altri su in cielo :



Io ti conforto ch'ogni tuo disio  
 Rivolga a quel Signor con giusto zelo :  
 Che tu sarai felice in sempiterno,  
 Ch'eri perduto, e dannato a l'inferno.

## LX.

E grande onore a Morgante faceva  
 L'abate, e molti dì si son posati :  
 Un giorno, come ad Orlando piaceva,  
 A spasso in qua e in là si sono andati :  
 L'abate in una camera sua aveva  
 Molte armadure e certi archi appiccati :  
 Morgante gliene piacque un che ne vede ;  
 Onde e' sel cïnse bench'oprar nol crede.

## LXI.

Avea quel luogo d'acqua carestia :  
 Orlando disse come buon fratello :  
 Morgante, vo' che di piacer ti sia  
 Andar per l'acqua ; ond'e rispose a quello :  
 Comanda ciò che vuoi che fatto sia ;  
 E posesi in ispalla un gran tinello,  
 Ed avviossi là verso una fonte  
 Dove solea ber sempre appiè del monte.

## LXII.

Giunto a la fonte, sente un gran fracasso  
 Di subito venir per la foresta ;  
 Una saetta cavò del turcasso,  
 Posela a l'arco, ed alzava la testa .  
 Ecco appariri un gran gregge al passo  
 Di porti, e vanno con molta tempesta ;  
 E arrivorno a la fontana appunto  
 Donde il gigante è da lor sopraggiunto.

## LXIII.

Morgante a la ventura a un saetta ;  
Appunto ne l'orecchio lo 'ncarnava :  
Da l'altro lato passò la verretta ;  
Onde il cinghial giù morto gambettava ,  
Un altro, quasi per farne vendetta,  
Addosso al gran gigante irato andava ;  
E perchè e' giunse troppo tosto al varco,  
Non fu Morgante a tempo a trar con l'arco.

## LXIV.

Vedendosi venuto il porco adosso,  
Gli dette in su la testa un gran punzone  
Per modo che gl'infranse insino a l'osso.  
E morto allato a quell'altro lo pone :  
Gli altri porci veggendo quel percosso,  
Si misson tutti in fuga pel vallone ;  
Morgante si levò il tinello in collo,  
Ch'era pien d'acqua, e non si move un crollo

## LXV.

Da l'una spalla il tinello avea posto,  
Da l'altra i porci, e specciava il terreno ;  
E torna a la badia, che pur discosto,  
Ch'una gocciola d'acqua non va in seno  
Orlando che'l vedea tornar sì tosto -  
Co' porci morti, e con quel vaso pieno  
Maravigliossi che sia tanto forte ;  
Così l'abate ; e spalancan le porte.

## LXVI.

I monaci veggendo l'acqua fresca  
Si rallegrorno, ma più de' cingiali ;  
Ch'ogni animal si allegre de l'esca ;  
E posano a dormire i breviali

Ognun s'affanna, e non par che gl'incresca,  
 Acciò che questa carne non s'insali,  
 E che poi secca sapesse di victo :  
 E la digiune si restorno a drieto.

## LXVII.

E fernò a scoppia corpo per un tratto,  
 E scuffian, che parien de l'acqua usciti ;  
 Tanto che'l cane sen doleva e'l gatto,  
 Che gli ossi rimanean troppo puliti.  
 L'abate, poi che molto onore ha fatto  
 A tutti, un dì dopo questi conviti  
 Dette a Morgante un destrier molto bello,  
 Che lungo tempo tenuto avea quello.

## LXVIII.

Morgante in su'n un prato il caval mena,  
 E vuol che corra, e ehe facci ogni pruova,  
 E pensa che di ferro abbi la schiena,  
 O forse non credeva schiacciar l'uova :  
 Questo caval s'accoscia per la pena,  
 E scoppia, e'n su la terra si ritruova.  
 Dicea Morgante : lieva gu, tozzone ;  
 E va pur punzecchiando co lo sprone.

## LXIX.

Ma finalmente convien ch' egli smonte,  
 E disse : io son pur legger come penna,  
 Ed è scoppiato ; che ne di' tu, conte ?  
 Rispose Orlando : un arbore d'antenna  
 Mi par piuttosto, e la gaggia la fronte :  
 Lascialo andar, che la fortuna accenna  
 Che meco appiede ne venga, Morgante.  
 Ed io così verrò, disse il gigante.

## IL MORGANTE MAGGIORE.

### LXX.

Quando serà mestier, tu mi vedrai  
Com'io mi proverò ne la battaglia.  
Orlando disse: io credo tu farai  
Come buon cavalier, se Dio mi vaglia;  
Ed ancò m'è dormir non miterai:  
Di questo tuo caval non te ne caglia:  
Vorrebbe si portarlo in qualche bosco;  
Ma il modo nè la via non ci conosco.

### LXXI.

Disse il gigante: io il porterò ben'io,  
Da poi che portar me non ha voluto,  
Per render ben per mal, come fa Dio;  
Ma vo' che a porlo addosso mi dia ajuto.  
Orlando gli dicea: Morgante mio,  
S'al mio consiglio ti sarai attenuto,  
Questo caval tu non ve'l porteresti,  
Che ti farà come tu a lui facesti,

### LXXII.

Guarda che non facesse la vendetta,  
Come fece già Nesso così morto:  
Non so se la sua istoria hai inteso o letta;  
E' ti farà scoppiar; datti conforto.  
Disse Morgante: ajuta ch'io me'l metta  
Addosso, e poi vedrai s'io ve lo porto:  
Io porterei, Orlando mio gentile,  
Con le campane là quel campanile.

### LXXIII.

Disse l'abate: il campanil v'è bene;  
Ma le campane voi l'avete rotte.  
Dicea Morgante, e ne porton le pene  
Color che morti son là in quelle grotte;

E levossi il cavallo in su le schiene,  
 E disse : guarda s'io sento di gotte,  
 Orlando, nelle gambe, e s' io lo posso ;  
 E fe' duo salti col cavallo addosso.

## LXXIV.

Era Morgante come una montagna .  
 Se faceva questo, non è maraviglia  
 Ma pure Orlando con seco si lagna ;  
 Perchè pur era omai di sua famiglia,  
 Temenza avea non pigliasse magagna.  
 Un' altra volta costui riconsiglia :  
 Posalo ancor, nol portare al deserto.  
 Disse Morgante : il porterò per certo.

## LXXV.

E portollo, e gittollo in luogo strano,  
 E tornò a la badia subitamente.  
 Diceva Orlando : or che più dimoriano  
 Morgante, qui non faciam noi niente ;  
 E prese un giorno l'abate per mano,  
 E disse a quel molto discretamente,  
 Che vuol partir de la sua reverenzia,  
 E domandava e perdono e licenzia

## LXXVI

E de gli onor' ricevuti da questi,  
 Qualche volta potendo, ara buon merito ;  
 E dice : io intendo ristorare e presto  
 I persi giorni del tempo preterito :  
 E'son più di che licenzia arei chiesto,  
 Benigno padre, se non ch' io mi perito ;  
 Non so mostrarvi quel che drento sento ,  
 Tanto vi veggio del mio star contento.

## LXXVII.

Io me ne potto per sempre nel core  
 L'abate, la badia, questo deserto ;  
 Tanto v'ho posto in picciol tempo amore :  
 Rendavi su nel ciel per me buon merto  
 Quel vero Dio, quello eterno Signore  
 Che vi serba il suo regno al fine aperto :  
 Noi aspettiam vostra benedizione,  
 Raccomandiamci a le vostre orazione.

## LXXVIII.

Quando l'abate il conte Orlando intese,  
 Rintenerli nel cor per la dolcezza,  
 T'anto fervor nel petto se gli accese ,  
 E disse : cavalier, se a tua prodezza  
 Non sono stato benigno e cortese,  
 Come conviensi a la gran gentillezza ,  
 Che so che ciò ch'i'ho fatto è stato poco,  
 Incolpa la ignoranzia nostra, e il loco.

## LXXIX.

Noi ti potremo di messe onorare,  
 Di prediche di laude e paternostri,  
 Piuttosto che da cena o desinare,  
 O d'altri convenevol' che da chiostri :  
 Tu m'hai di te sì fatto innamorare  
 Per mille alte eccellenzie che tu mostri,  
 Ch'io me ne vengo ove tu andrai con teco,  
 E d'altra parte tu resti qui meco.

## LXXX.

Tanto ch'a questo par contraddizione ;  
 Ma so che tu se' savio, e 'ntendi e gusti,  
 E intendi il mio parlar per descrizione ;  
 De' beneficj tuoi pietosi e giusti

Renda il Signor<sup>o</sup> la te munerazione,  
 Da cui mandato in queste selve fusti ;  
 Per le virtù del qual liberi siamo,  
 E grazie a lui e a te noi ne rendiamo.

## LXXX.

Tu ci hai salvato l'anima e la vita :  
 Tanta perturbazion già que' giganti  
 Ci detton, che la strada era smarrita  
 Da ritrovar Gesù con gli altri santi :  
 Però troppo ci duol la tua partita,  
 E sconsolati restiam tutti quanti ;  
 Nè ritener possiamti i mesi e gli anni :  
 Che tu non se' da vestir questi panni,

## LXXXI.

Ma da portar la lancia e l'armadura :  
 E puossi meritar con essa, come  
 Con questa cappa ; e leggi la scrittura :  
 Questo gigante al ciel drizzò le some  
 Per tua virtù ; va in pace a tua ventura  
 Chi tu ti sia ; ch'io non ricerò il nome :  
 Ma dirò sempre, s'io son demandato,  
 Ch' un angiol qui da Dio fussi mandato.

## LXXXII.

Se c'è armadura o cosa che tu voglia,  
 Vattene in zambra e pigliane tu stessi,  
 E cuopri a questo gigante la scoglia.  
 Rispose Orlando : se armadura avessi  
 Prima che noi uscissim de la soglia,  
 Che questo mio compagno difendessi :  
 Questo accetto io, e sarammi piacere.  
 Disse l'abate : venite a vedere.

## LXXXIII.

E in certa cameretta entrati sono,  
Che d'armadure vecchie era copiosa ;  
Dice l'abate : tutte ve le dono.  
Morgante va rovistando ogni cosa ;  
Ma solo un certo sbergo gli fu buono,  
Ch'avea tutta la maglia rugginosa :  
Maravigliossi che lo cuopra appunto :  
Che mai più gnun forse glien' era aggiunto.

## LXXXIV.

Questo fu d'un gigante smisurato,  
Ch'a la badia fu morto per antico  
Dal gran Milon d'Anglante, ch' arrivato ?  
V' era, s'appunto questa istoria dico ;  
Ed era ne le mura istoriato,  
Come e'fu morto questo gran nimico  
Che fece a la badia già lunga guerra :  
E Milon v'è com'e'labbatte in terra.

## LXXXV.

Veggendo questa istoria il conte Orlando,  
Fra suo cor disse : o Dio, che sai sol tutto,  
Come venne Milon qui capitando,  
Che ha questo gigante qui distrutto  
E l'esse certe lettere lacrimando,  
Che non potè tenir più il viso asciutto,  
Com'io dirò ne la seguente istoria.  
Di mal vi guardi il Re de l'alta gloria.





## LETTERS FROM ABROAD.

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### LETTER IV.

DEAR C——,

I HOPE you have not forgotten the thoughts you entertained of visiting Italy. I set your father longing to accompany you, when I saw him. N.'s holidays are approaching; and I should be glad to know what all three of you could do better than to come arm-in-arm, joking and to joke, and see one who hungers and thirsts after his old friends. I have much to offer you, "though I say it who should not." Imprimis, all that line of French territory which extends from Calais to the Alps, and which, with the help of Mr. Roscoe's famous song, and Mrs. Radcliffe's romances, you will find as gay as the inhabitants:—2ndly, Rousseau and Les Charmettes by the way:—3rdly, the passage of Mont Cenis, which is among the performances of one Bonaparte: 4thly, Turin, where you will have the happiness of seeing your legitimate monarch, the King of Sardinia, unless he is still eating sweatmeats at Genoa, where we have the good fortune to possess him at present:—5thly, the Appenines, though, at the sea-side here, they are but the footstools of the rest:—6thly, Genoa, with its grand palaces, and half the mules in Italy:—7thly, and lastly, a little hill, called Albaro, containing vineyards and olive trees, stone allies, and certain

"Signori Inglesi," large and small, who will shout for joy at the sight of you. Venite, venite. You know how cheaply I can lodge and feed you; and though our house lets at but £20. a year, you can have your choice out of forty rooms to sleep in. There is nothing between this sort of house and the cottages of the peasantry unless one goes to lodge in town, which would cost a great deal more. For £24. a year, you can hire a palace. Again and again, therefore, I say, come. During the evening and early morning, I will shew you about. The rest of the time we will eat, sleep, lounge, read and converse. It will be hard if we do not have some music. There are pictures by Raphael and Guido in the palaces. The fruits are fine: the colours of things exquisite; every object about you new. You cannot help being pleased: and I myself shall catch a new inspiration from your coming, and will at least warrant my being merry for as long a time as you stay.

You know all that I am at present acquainted with, respecting the city of Genoa; but as a scholar and a lover of the country, especially one who has never been in the South, there are some other points which will not be without their importance in your eyes. The first sight of the olive trees and cypresses will remind you of a hundred things, Greek, Latin, and Italian. Fancy yourself in Virgil's country, seeing the lizards run up the walls, and hearing the *cicada*. Both of them retain almost their identical names, *luerta*, and *cicala*. Then there are the fire-flies, divine little creatures, which rule the night here, as bees and butterflies rule the day.—But I must lay before you my temptations more slowly. Travellers, hearing so much of olive trees, and accustomed to their piquant fruit, are generally disappointed at sight of them. Whether my enthusiasm bore me out or not, I know not, but I liked it; or rather them, for one by

itself is equivocal. You must see them in a body, or, still better, contrasted with chesnut and cypresses. They have an aspect singularly light and hazy. The leaves are stiff, hard, pointed, willow-like, dark above, and of a light leathern colour underneath; the trunk slight, dry-looking, crooked, and almost always branches off into a double stem at a little distance from the ground.\* A wood of them looks like a huge hazy bush, more light than dark, and glimmering with innumerable specks; which are the darker sides of the leaves. When the fruit is on them, they seem powdered with myriads of little black balls. My wife says, that olive trees look as if they only grew by moonlight; which gives a better idea of their light, faded aspect, than a more prosaical description. The cypress is a poplar, grown more sombre, stately, and heavy: not to be moved by every flippan air; it is of a beautiful dark colour, and contrasts admirably with trees of a rounder figure.† Two or three cypress trees by the side of a white or yellow cottage, roofed and windowed like our new cottage-houses near London, the windows often without glass, form alone an Italian picture; and constantly remind you that you are at a distance from home. The consumption of olive oil is immense. It is doubtless no mean exasperator of Italian bile. \* The author of an Art of Health highly approves a moderate use of it, both in diet and medicine; but says, that as soon as it becomes cooked, fried, or otherwise abused, it inflames the blood, disturbs the humours, irritates the fibres, and produces other effects very superflu-

\* "*Olea Europæa. Foglie lanciolate, sopra verdi sotto bianche coriacee.*"  
*Targioni—Istituzioni Botaniche.—Vol. 2.*

† "*Cupressus Pyramidalis. Ramieretti, avvicinati. Foglie giovani acute, scorrenti, adulte ottuse, embriate per quattro parti. Strobili ovati, più larghi alla base.*"—*Id. Vol. 3.*

ous in a stimulating climate. The notoriousness of the abuse makes him cry out, and ask how much better it would be to employ this pernicious quantity of oil in lighting the streets and roads. He thinks it necessary however to apologize to his countrymen for this apparent inattention to their pecuniary profits, adding, that he makes amends by diverting them into another channel. I fear the two ledgers would make a very different show of profit and loss: not to mention, that unless the oil were consecrated, or the lamps hung very high, it would assuredly be devoured. We have a difficulty in keeping the servants from disputing its food with our lamp-light. Their lucubrations are of a more internal nature.

The rather thou,  
Celestial light, shine inwards.

I am told that the olive trees grow finer and finer as you go southwards. The chesnut trees are very beautiful; the spiky-looking branches of leaves, long, and of a noble green, show gloriously, as you look up against the intense blue of the sky. Am I reminding you of a common place, in saying that the *castanets* used in the dancing, evidently originated in the nuts of this tree, *castagnette*? They are made in general, I believe, of cockle-shells, or an imitation of them; but the name renders their vegetable descent unequivocal. It is pleasant to observe the simple origin of pleasant things. Some loving peasants, time immemorial, fall dancing under the trees: they pick up the nuts, rattle them in their hands; and behold (as the Frenchman says) the birth of the fandango.

As you walk through the lanes in warm weather, you startle the lizards at every step. They run up the walls swiftly, but in a climbing manner, moving their sides alternately. But what is that very loud cricket? The noise ceases; and with a whirr almost as strong as that of a little bird, the

creature comes spinning across the lane. It is a great winged grasshopper,—the cicada,—the *τρίττις*,—the grasshopper of Virgil, of Theocritus, of *Anacreon*. When I first saw it, I almost felt as if *Anacreon* were alive, and all the South was his country. It is undoubtedly of the same species as our grasshopper, though our name does not suit it, for it lives in the trees, *διδόρουν ἐν' ἀκρῶν*. I have not yet heard them in chorus, the hot weather not having set in. They will begin singing, if scratched gently on the breast; and boys catch them to startle people with. A gentleman tells me, that when he was at school, he and a set of his fellows caught a great number, and suddenly opened their music at the schoolmaster, who could not be heard.

All the insect tribes, good and bad, acquire vigour and size as they get southwards. I have seen however but one scorpion yet, and the rascal was young; we were looking upon him with much interest, and speculating upon his turn of mind, when a female servant quietly took out her scissors and cut him in two. Her bile, with eating oil and minestra, was as much exalted as his. Is it true that all poison is nothing but an essential acid, exalted in proportion to its venom? The discovery of the Prussic Acid, which kills instantly, looks like it.—Our antipathies are set up every now and then, by the sight of some new and hideous-looking insect; but we have not seen a twentieth part of what we expected. The flies bite so, that the *zanzaliere* (the bed-net against the gnats) seems quite as necessary against them as the enemy from whom it is named. The gnats have hardly come; yet we have been obliged to take to it. We have not yet seen the *mantis*, which I am told will turn its head round at music, and seem to listen. Of the silk-worms, *hotiç* has just been given us in the neighbourhood by a general stripping of the leaves off the mulberry-trees. The beauty of the bees

and butterflies you may imagine. But there is one insect, of so fairy-like a nature and lustre, that it would be almost worth coming in the south to look at, if there were no other attraction. I have already alluded to it,—the *fire-fly*. Imagine thousands of flashing diamonds every night powdering the ground, the trees, and the air; especially in the darkest places, and the corn-fields. They give at once a delicacy and brilliance to Italian darkness, inconceivable. It is the glow-worm, winged, and flying in crowds. In England, you know, the female alone gives light: at least, that of the male, who is the exclusive possessor of the wings, is hardly perceptible. Worm is a wrong word, the creature being a real insect.—The Italian name is *Lucciola*, Little-light,—in Genoa, *Cæe-belle* (*Chiare-belle*)—Clear and fine. Its aspect, when held in the hand, is that of a dark-coloured beetle, but without the hardness or sluggish look. The light is contained in the under part of the extremity of the abdomen, exhibiting a dull golden-coloured partition by day, and flashing occasionally by day-light, especially when the hand is shaken. At night, the flashing is that of the purest and most lucid fire, spangling the vineyards and olive-trees, and their dark avenues, with innumerable stars. Its use is not known. In England, and I believe here, the supposition is, that it is a signal of love. It affords no perceptible heat, but is supposed to be phosphoric. In a dark room, a single one is sufficient to flash a light against the wall. I have read of a lady in the West Indies, who could see to read by the help of three under a glass, as long as they chose to accommodate her. A few of them are generally in our rooms all night, going about like little sparkling elves. It is impossible not to think of something spiritual, in seeing the progress of one of them through a dark room. You only know it by the flashing of its lamp, which takes place every

three or four inches apart, sometimes oftener, thus marking its track in and out the apartment, or about it. It is like a little fairy taking its rounds. These insects remind us of the lines in Herrick, inviting his mistress to come to him at night-time; and they suit them still better than his English ones:—

Their lights the glow-worms lend thee;  
The shooting stars attend thee;  
And the elves also,  
Whose little eyes glow  
Like the sparks of fire, befriend thee.

To me, who pass more of my time even than usual, in the ideal world, these spiritual-looking little creatures are more than commonly interesting. S. used to watch them for hours. I look at them, and wonder whether any of the particles he left upon earth help to animate their loving and lovely light. The last fragment he wrote, which was a welcome to me on my arrival, began with a simile taken from their dusk look and the fire underneath it, in which he found a likeness to his friend. They had then just made their appearance. Do you recollect coming down to Buckinghamshire one summer? Come to Italy now, and help me to bear a thousand recollections full of him and all beautiful things.—There is one circumstance respecting these fire-flies, quite as extraordinary as any. There appears to be no mention of them in the ancient poets. Now of all insects, even southern, they are perhaps the most obvious to poetical notice: it is difficult to see how any poet, much less a pastoral or an amatory one, could *help* speaking of them; and yet they make their appearance neither in the Greek nor Latin poets, neither in Homer (at least I believe not) nor Virgil, nor Ovid, nor Anacreon, nor Theocritus. Per-



haps you can set me right. The earliest mention of them, with which I am acquainted, is in Dante, (*Inferno*, Canto 26) where he compares the spirits in the eighth circle of hell, who go about swathed in fire, to the "*lucciole*" in a rural valley of an evening. A truly saturnine perversion of a beautiful object! I see, by the dictionary, that Pliny mentions a glow-worm of some sort under the name of *cicindela*; but I have no Pliny to consult. The Greek word is *Lampyris*, which is retained in Entomology. Does nature put forth a new production now and then, like an author? Has the glow-worm been exalted into the fire-fly by the greater heat of the modern Italian soil, which appears indisputable?

I conclude with a specimen or two of the Genoese dialect, which is much disdained by the Tuscans, but which the Genoese say is the next best dialect in Italy to the Venetian. I know not what the Neapolitans and Sicilians would say to this; but it is certainly better than the Mantuan and Bergamasque, specimens of which (together with Venetian, Neapolitan, and Paduan), you will find in Coxe's *Picture of Italy*. Dante says, in his treatise *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, that if the Genoese were deprived of the letter Z, they would be dumb. But Dante's dislikes did not stand upon ceremony. When written, the dialect has a look of Provençal in it; and doubtless it contains a good deal of old French, and has drawn upon all its neighbours. Z abounds in the shape of S and X, as well as its own; but not any thing to the extent that Dante speaks of. They have the French *u*, which they write *œu*; and their diphthong without the *u* has also a petty effect. The soft *gl* of the Tuscans they convert into a *dg* or double *g*; which often recurs and is very unpleasant. Thus *figlio*, a son, is *figgiœu*; and their words for *pigliare pane*, to get bread, sound as if they said *pigger pang*, the *r* at the

same time being heard very little, if at all, like the final one of Londoners. Indeed, I observe in their books, that they write their infinitive moods without the *r*, putting a circumflex instead, as *piggià*, *passà*, *sparegà*, *da fà*. I should suppose they dropt this *r*, which adds so much strength to the softness of the Tuscan, in order to diminish the roughness of their language, if they did not seem to take pains to add to it in other instances. The people, as in all commercial countries, have a tendency to cut their words short for dispatch of business; and their pronunciation is harsh and mean. There is a joke of a Neapolitan's telling a man, in a fine breathing strain, that he had seen an eagle fly; upon which the Genoese asks, whether an eagle has wings. But whether this is to ridicule the boasting of the Neapolitan, or the ignorance of the Genoese, I know not.—Neapolitan. "*Haggio veduta un aquila volare.*"—Genoese. "*A i àeia i -ae?*" This brevity sounds still shorter than it looks:—(*A-yea-ae-ai.*) The Genoese language seems copious and expressive, and I am told they have good translations of Tasso, and of some of Moliere's comedies. Serassi, Tasso's biographer, speaks highly, I see, of the former. Their principal native poet, Cavalli, lived in the time of Chiabrera, who eulogizes him as a man of original genius. His works, which are now before me, I shall try to spell *pro bono publico*, a good poet being too good a thing to be confined to his native town. The following is a stanza of a poem written in the Genoese dialect upon the passion for religious processions. A gentleman has translated it into Tuscan for me. The author fancies a lover of processions to have risen from the dead, on purpose to indulge himself in his favourite pastime. The whole poem is reckoned very pleasant, and appears so by what I can discern of it. The present stanza is the climax of the sight, the appearance of the *gran cascata* or final

group of figures carried on men's shoulders in honour of the saint concerned, who is St. James. Maragiano was a maker of these wooden figures, whose memory is celebrated in Genoa.

Særa o crocco a gran Cascia. Oh che esprescion !  
 Maragiano l'ha fæto parlà o legno :  
 Ogni figëtta fîn vedde unna passion ;  
 Ogni testa, ogni gamba a l'é à so segno ;  
 So i Moi, e i Saraceni in confuxion :  
 Tutto de l'arte, e de l'Autò l'é degno,  
 Ma s'oi vedde unna cosa de ciù ardite,  
 Mixe o cavallo, e scappæ, co no ve tie.

Ecco ul fin la gran cassa ! Oh che espressione !  
 Ah, Maragiano fe parlare il legno !  
 Ogni statua veder fa una passione ;  
 Ogni testa, ogni gamba, è al proprio segno ;  
 Sou Mori e Saraceni in confusione :  
 Tutto dell' arte e dell' autore e degno.  
 Ma se veder vuoi cosa ancor più ardita,  
 Mira il cavallo, e scappa, O egli ti trita.

See—there's the group at last ! Oh, what expression !  
 How Maragiano brings the blockheads out !  
 There's not a figure but it's in a passion ;  
 The heads and legs know all what they're about :  
 The Moors and Saracens—Christ ! what a crashing !  
 All's worthy of the workman, there's no doubt.  
 But if you want some thing still more to strike you,  
 Look at that horse there ! Scamper, or he'll kick you.

For the prose, I will take an old jest or two out of an Italian grammar, putting the original Italian first, and adding an English translation “ for the benefit of the country gentlemen.” The ladies require these helps less and less every day.

Un contadino passando sul Ponte Nuovo di Parigi, ed osservando fra molte botteghe piene di mercanzie quella d'un cambista, nella quale eravi soltanto un uomo, e un tavolino con carta e calamaio, volle entrar dentro per curiosità, e domandare che cosa vendevasi: "Delle teste d'asino," rispose il cambista: "Bisogna," soggiunse il contadino, "che abbiano un grande spaccio, perchè non vi è rimasta che la vostra"

Un paisun passando sciù o Ponte Neuvo Parigi, e osservando fra e varie butteghe pinne de mercansiae quella d'un bancaotto ne-a quale non gh'era che un ômmo con un tavolin, do' papæ, e un caamâ, ghe venne a curiositæ d'intraghæ e de domandâ un po' cose se ghe vendèiva: "Dæ testæ d'âse," ghe rispose, bancaotto: "Bæusæugna," di repigio' o' paisan, "che queste aggian un gran smercio, perche non gh' e resto che a vostra."

A countryman passing over the Pont Neuf at Paris, and seeing, among a heap of shops full of merchandize, that of a banker in which there was nothing but a man sitting at a table with pen and ink, had the curiosity to go in and enquire what it was he sold: "Asses' heads," replied the banker: "They must be in great request," said the countryman, "since you have only your own left."

Un signore cenando a un osteria in una piccola città, quando fu sparcchiato, l'oste gli domandò, come gli era piaciuta la cena. "Moltissimo." rispose quel signore; "posso dire d'aver cenato bene al par di qualunque gran personaggio nel regno." "Eccettuato il Signor Governatore," disse l'oste.— "Io non eccettuo nessuno," rispose egli, "Ma voi dovete sempre eccettuare il Signor Governatore," replicò l'oste. "Ma io non voglio," soggiunse il gentiluomo. In breve, la loro disputa si accese talmente, che l'oste, il quale era un magistrato subalterno, ma non però simile a Solone o a Li-

curgo, fece chiamare il gentiluomo davanti al Governatore. Questo magistrato, la cui capacità era in perfetto equilibrio con quella dell'oste disse con aria grave al gentiluomo, che l'eccettuare il Signor Governatore in ogni cosa era in quella città un inveteratissimo costume; e che a tal costume era obbligato ciascuno d'uniformarsi; e perciò lo condannava all'amenda d'uno scellino per aver vicusato di farlo. "Benissimo," rispose il gentiluomo: "ecco uno scellino; ma possa io morire se v'è nel modo un più gran pazzo dell'oste, Eccettuato il Signor Governatore."

Cenando un scioù otafa t'unna piccola città, appena a to-a fu desbarraççà, l'oste ghe domandò come gh'era piaxua a çennha. "Moltissimo," ghe rispose quello scioù; "posso asseguave d'avei çenou ben a-o paro de qualunque gran personaggio do' regno. "Eççettuou ò Scioù Governo'u," ghe disse l'oste. "Mi non eççettúo nisciun," ghe rispose o' scioù. "Ma vui dovei sempre eççettua ò Scioù Governou," replicò l'oste. "E mi non veuggio eççettua un corno," soggiunse o' gentilommo. In poco tempo a disputa a se aseàdo a tá segno, che l'oste, u quale u l'era un magistrato subalterno, non però simile a Solon o a Licurgo, o fece ciammà o' gentilommo davanti o Governou. Questo magistrato, che in punto de capacità o l'era in perfetto equilibrio con l'oste, o disse con aia grave a-o gentilommo, che in l'eççettua o' Governou in tutte æ cose l'era un uso antighissimo in quella città; che ciasçunera obbligou d'uniformàse a quest'uso, e che per avei recusou da fàlo, o lo condannava all'emenda d'un scellin. "Va benissimo," rispose gentilommo, "piggia chi un scellin; ma vorrieva ese ammassou, se se treuva a-o mondo un ommo cui matto de l'oste, Eççettuou ò Sehou Governou."

A gentleman supping at an inn in a petty city, the landlord, when the things were cleared away, asked him whether

his supper had pleased him. "Very much," said the gentleman: "I may affirm that I have supped as well as the greatest man in the kingdom." "Except the Signor Governor," said the landlord. "I except nobody," returned the other. "But you ought always to except the Signor Governor," replied the host. "But I will not," said the gentleman. In short, the dispute grew so warm, that the host, who was a bit of a magistrate himself, not very like Solon or Lysurgus, summoned his guest before the Governor. This officer, whose capacity was on a perfect level with that of his informer, said with a grave air to the gentleman, that to except the Governor upon every occasion was a custom of the most ancient standing, to which all persons were obliged to conform, and therefore he condemned him to the penalty of a shilling for having refused to do so. "Mighty well," replied the gentleman; "there's your shilling, but hang me if there is a greater fool upon earth than the landlord,—Except the Signor Governor."

This story reminds me of one in a new set of Arabian Tales (genuine) which, whether you have read it or not, you will not be sorry to hear repeated. A schoolmaster (worthy brother of the Scholar in Hierocles) taught his boys, whenever they heard him sneeze, to rise up with solemnity, cross their hands on their bosoms, and ejaculate, "God preserve our venerable tutor!" One day he took them out for a walk; and the weather being hot, it was proposed they should drink at a well. The well was deep, so the master made them join their turbans together for a rope, and descending to the bottom, handed them up their drink one after the other. The refreshment over, he bade them draw him up again, and had nearly reached the top, when the coldness of the well making him sneeze, the whole posse instantly let go the rope, threw themselves into their accus-

turned attitude, and exclaimed with fervour, "God preserve our venerable tutor!"—who broke his leg.

But the Governor has reminded me of another story, which is new, and which concerns the Governor of our city here; a different sort of man, and popular, notwithstanding his Sardinian office. He is a Savoyard Marquis of the name of D'Yennes, and relates the story himself with much glee. As he was coming to take possession of his appointment, he stopped at a town not far from Genoa, the inhabitants of which were ambitious of doing him honour. They accordingly gave him an entertainment, at which was an allegorical picture containing *a hyæna surrounded with Cupids*. The hyæna was supposed to be a translation of his name. Upon requesting an explanation of the compliment, he received the following smiling reply:—" *Les Amours, Monsieur, sont nous; et vous êtes la bête.*" ("The Loves, Sir, are ourselves,—the beast is you.")

If you do not thump your knee at this story, I shall conclude you have left off discussing the debates in Parliament, and are no longer in need of your usual refreshment.

Your's ever sincerely.

## THE CHOICE. \*

———Nec vos, daleissima mundi  
Nomina, vos, Musæ, libertas, otia, libri,  
Hortique, silvæque, animâ remanente, relinquam

Nor by me e'er shall you,  
You, of all names the sweetest and the best,  
You, Muses, books, and liberty, and rest,  
You, gardens, fields, and woods, forsaken be,  
As long as life itself forsakes not me.

COWLEY.

I HAVE been reading Pomfret's *Choice* this spring,  
A pretty kind of-sort-of-kind of thing;  
Not much a verse, and poem none at all;  
Yet, as they say, extremely natural.  
And yet I know not. There's a skill in pies,  
In raising crusts as well as galleries;  
And he's the poet, more or less, who knows  
The charm that hallows the least thing from prose,  
And dresses it in its mild singing clothes.  
Poetry's that which sets a thought apart,  
To worship Nature with a choral heart:  
And may be seen where rarely she intrudes,  
As birds in cages make us think of woods.

\* It is hardly necessary to say, that the mode of life which the author desires for himself in this dreaming speculation, is only such as he could contemplate for his own actual life, and in the present condition of things. If he were speculating for the rest of the world, and upon the possible condition of things, it would be much further modified; and certain personages who make their appearance in it would not be heard of.



Beaux have it in them, when they love the faces  
Of cuntry damsels, and their worsted graces.  
E'en satire, if of laurelled race, retains  
A taste of sweetness in its finer veins;  
Or like its friend, the common stocks, may be  
Touched with a shadow of the living tree.  
The greatest poets please the greatest wits,  
But every reader loves the least by fits :  
The former lord it in their vast editions ;  
But t'others' cards still gain them recognitions :  
The ladies rise in heaps and give them sweet admissions.

But to the *Choice*. It pleased me as I read,  
Walked with me forth, and went with me to bed.  
And as, when somebody at dinner glows  
In praise of what he likes, soups, harricoes,  
Grouse or a carp, the rest as surely join  
In praise of that on which they like to dine,—  
So Pomfret's likings make me think of mine.  
*I'll* write a *Choice*, said I : and it shall be  
Something 'twixt labour and *extempore* ;  
Not long, yet not too quick on the conclusion,  
And for its ease I'll call it an effusion.  
All that I vouch for is to shun the crime,  
(Death, by all laws) of writing for the rhyme.  
I shall not please all tastes, as Pomfret did,  
Even though he said he'd " live a man forbid." \*

\* Videlitet, that he would " have no wife : " which not only threatened to lose him his living, but actually cost him his life : for the obstructions raised by his enemies in the mind of Dr. Compton the bishop, constrained his presence in London, where he caught the small pox and died in 1703, in the thirty-sixth year of his age.—See his life by Johnson.—It is curious, that what would have been hailed as a saintly recommendation in a clergyman at one period of the Church, should become so profane a drawback in another.

Men, in these times, have notions of their own,  
 And something called a zeal, which makes them known;  
 Else I would print my fancy by itself,  
 And be "a love" on every lady's shelf:  
 Perhaps I shall be so, some day or other;  
 But I'd at once please every prudent mother;  
 Not locked in cupboards, like "a losel vilde,"  
 With sups and sweetmeats that would "hurt the child;"  
 But bound in lilac, register'd with rose,  
 I'd smile on tables in the parson's nose;  
 My lady's woman should approve my lays,  
 And all the Tomkinse and Critics' praise.

Come then, ye scenes of quiet and content,  
 Ye goals of life, on which our hearts are spent,—  
 Meet my worn eyes. I love you, e'en in vales  
 Of cups and saucers, and such Delfic dales,  
 Much more in pen and ink, as bard beseems;  
 Come—take me to your arms in bowery dreams.

First, on a green I'd have a low, broad house,  
 Just seen by travellers through the garden boughs;  
 And that my luck might not seem ill bestowed,  
 A bench and spring should greet them on the road.  
 My grounds should not be large; I like to go  
 To Nature for a range, and prospect too,  
 And cannot fancy she'll comprise for me,  
 Even in a park, her all-sufficiency.  
 Besides, my thoughts fly far; and when at rest,  
 Love, not a watch-tower, but a lulling nest.  
 But all the ground I had should keep a look  
 Of Nature still, have birds'-nests and a brook;  
 One spot for flowers, the rest all turf and trees;

For I'd not grow my own bad lettuces.  
 And above all, no house should be so near,  
 That strangers should discern me here and there;  
 Much less when some fair friend was at my side,  
 And swear I thought her charming,—which I did.  
 I am not sure I'd have a rookery;  
 But sure I am I'd not live near the sea,  
 To view its great flat face, and have my sleeps  
 Filled full of shrieking dreams and foundering ships;  
 Or hear the drunkard, when his slaughter's o'er,  
 Like Sinbad's monster scratching on the shore.  
 I'd live far inland, in a world of glades,  
 Yet not so desart as to fright the maids :  
 A batch of cottages should smoke beside ;  
 And there should be a town within a morning's ride.

My house of brick should not be great or mean,  
 Much less built formally, outside or in.  
 I hate the trouble of a mighty house,  
 That worst of mountains labouring with a mouse ;  
 And should dislike as much to fill a niche in  
 A Grecian temple opening to a kitchen.  
 The frogs in Homer should have had such boxes,  
 Or Æsop's frog, whose heart was like the ox's.  
 Such puff about high-roads, so grand, so small,  
 With wings and what not, portico and all,  
 And poor drenched pillars, which it seems a sin  
 Not to mat up at night-time, or take in.  
 I'd live in none of these. Nor would I have  
 Veranda'd windows to forestall my grave ;  
 Veranda'd truly, from the northern heat !  
 And cut down to the floor to comfort one's cold feet !  
 I like a thing to please the traveller's eye,

But more a house to live in, not to die.  
 Older than new I'd have it; dressed with blooms  
 Of homied green, and quaint with straggling rooms,  
 A few of which, white-bedded and well swept,  
 Should bear the name of friends for whom they're kept,  
 And yet to show I had a taste withal,  
 I'd have some casts of statues in the hall,  
 Or rather entrance, whose sweet steady eyes  
 Should touch the comers with a mild surprise,  
 And so conduct them, hushing to my door,  
 Where, if a friend, the house should hear a roar.  
 The grateful beggar should peep in at these,  
 And wonder what I did with Popish images.

My study should not be, as Pomfret's was,  
 Down in the garden; 'tis an awkward place  
 In winter; and in summer I prefer  
 To write my verses in the open air,  
 Stretched on the grass, under the yellow trees,  
 With a few books about me, and the bees.  
 My study should conclude the upper floor,  
 The stillest corner, with a double door:  
 The window (one) should just peep down between  
 The break of tree-tops on a sylvan scene;  
 And on the table, bending a bland eye,  
 I'd have, I think, a bust of Mercury.  
 The walls should be all books. No—here and there  
 I'd set a favourite head within a square,—  
 A square within the books, and so enclosed  
 With such as it loved dearest, or composed.  
 My dearest friend should show me his kind face,  
 Among the best, over the fire-place;  
 So that when winter came, and I could please

My sight no longer with the nestling trees  
 I should turn wholly round, and warm my heart  
 And feet alike with facing that best part;  
 Still feeling round about me all my books,  
 Those for love's arms, the fire-side for its looks.  
 You'll say, perhaps, there'd be a want of grace  
 In putting pictures in this kind of case:  
 There might in many rooms, but not in this;  
 For grace is greatest where affection is,  
 And merges, like a wife, her name in sympathy's.

Here would I write and read, till it was time  
 To ride or walk, or on the grass go rhyme;  
 For every day I'd be my friend enough  
 To spin my blood and whirl its humours off,  
 And take my draught of generous exercise,  
 The youth of age, and medicine of the wise.  
 And this reminds me, that behind some screen  
 About my grounds, I'd have a bowling-green;  
 Such as in wits' and merry women's days  
 Suckling preferred before his walk of bays.  
 You may still see them, dead as haunts of fairies,  
 By the old seats of Killigrew and Carews,  
 Where all, alas, is vanished from the ring,  
 Wits and black eyes, the skittles and the king!\*

\* Bowls are now thought vulgar: that is to say, a certain number of fine vulgar people agree to call them so. The fashion was once otherwise. Suckling prefers

A pair of black eyes, or a lucky hit  
 At bowls, above all the trophies of wit.

Piccadilly, in Clarendon's time, was a fair house of entertainment and gaming, with handsome gravel walks for shade, and where were an upper and a lower bowling green, whither very many of the nobility and gentry of

I'd never hunt, except the fox, and then  
 Not much, for fear I should fall hunting men,  
 And take each rogue I met for a stray soul,  
 That hadn't rights, and might not eat his fowl;  
 A thing, that by degrees might bring me round  
 To trespass on the squire's and lawyer's ground.  
 Fishing I hate, because I think about it,  
 Which makes it right that I should do without it.  
 A dinner, or a death might not be much;  
 But cruelty's a rod I dare not touch.  
 I own I cannot see my right to feel  
 For my own jaws, and tear a carp's with steel;  
 To troll him here and there, and spike, and strain,  
 And let him loose to jerk him back again.  
 Suppose a parson at this sort of work,  
 Not with his carp or salmon, but his clerk:  
 The clerk he snatches at a tempting bit,  
 And hah! an ear-ache with a knife in it!  
 That there is pain and evil is no rule  
 Why I should make it greater, like a fool;  
 Or rid me of my rest so vile a way,  
 As long as there's a single manly play.  
 The next conclusion to be drawn, might be,  
 That higher beings made a carp of me;  
 Which I would rather should not be the case;

the best quality resorted, both for exercise and conversation."—*Hist. of the Rebellion, Vol. 2.*—It seems to have been to the members of Parliament what Brooks's is now, and was a much better place for them to refresh their faculties in. The robust intellects of the Commonwealth grew there, and the airy wits that succeeded them. The modern gambling-houses are fit to produce nothing better than their name bespeaks. There grow our sottish financiers and timid intriguers. It is the same with the difference of the hours they keep.

Though "Izaak" were the saint to tear my face,  
 And stooping from his heaven with rod and line,  
 Made the damn'd sport, with his old dreams divine,  
 As pleasant to his taste as rough to mine.  
 Such sophistry, no doubt, saves half the hell,  
 And fish would have preferred his reasoning well ;  
 And if my gills concerned him, so should I.  
 The dog, I grant, is in that "equal sky :"  
 But, Heaven be praised, he's not my deity!

All manly games I'd play at : golf, and quoits,  
 And cricket, to set all my limbs to rights,  
 And make me conscious, with a due respect,  
 Of muscles one forgets by long neglect.  
 But as for prize-fights, with their butchering shows,  
 And crowds of blacklegs, I'd have none of those ;—  
 I am not bold in other people's blows.  
 Besides, I should reside so far from town,  
 Those human waves could never bear me down—  
 Which would endear my solitude, I own.  
 But if a neighbour, fond of his antiques,  
 Tried to renew a bout or two at sticks,  
 I'd do my best to force a handsome laugh  
 Under a ruddy crack from quarter staff  
 Nor think I had a right to walk my woods,  
 Coy of a science that was Robin Hood's.  
 'Tis healthy, and a man's ; and would assist  
 To make me wield a falchion in my fist,  
 Should foes arise who'd rather not be taught,  
 And war against the course of truth-exploring thought.

Thus would I study when alone, and thus  
 With friends and villagers a game discuss ;

And gather all the health and peace I could,  
Man's honey from the wilds and flowery wood.  
For in this picture, with its happy frame,  
I would not be the shaken thing I am.  
I'd write, because I could not help it; read  
Much more, but nothing to oppress my head;  
For heads are very different things at ease,  
And forced to bear huge loads for families.  
Still I would think of others; use my pen,  
As fits a man and lettered citizen,  
And so discharge my duty to the state;  
But as to fame and glory, fame might wait  
Nevertheless, I'd write a work in verse,  
Full of fine dreams and natural characters;  
Eastern perhaps, and gathered from a shore  
Whence never poet took his world before.  
To this sweet sphere I would retire at will,  
To sow it with delight, and shape with skill;  
And should it please me, and be roundly done,  
I'd launch it into light, to sparkle round the sun.

I'd have two friends live near me, perhaps three :  
Time was, when in one happy house——But he  
Has gone to his great home, over the dreadful sea.  
Oh Nature, we both loved thee! Pardon one  
To whom thine ocean, even in the sun,  
Has grown a monstrous and a morbid sight :—  
See how I try to love thee still, and dream of thy delight.

Come—let me go on with my builded bower:  
I should be nearer him, by many a weary hour.

In pleasure and in pain, alike I find  
My face turn tenderly to womankind:



But then they must be *truly* women,—not  
 Shes by the courtesy of a petticoat,  
 And left without enquiry to their claims,  
 Like haunted houses with their devil's dams  
 I'd mend the worst of women, if I could,  
 But for a constancy, give me the good ;—  
 I do not mean the formal or severe,  
 Much less the sly, who's all for character :  
 But such as, in all nations and all times,  
 Would be good creatures, fit for loving rhymes ;  
 Kind, candid, simple, yet of sterling sense,  
 And of a golden age for innocence.  
 Of these my neighbours should have choice relations ;  
 And I (though under certain alterations)  
 I too would bring—(though I dislike the name ;  
 The Reverend Mr. Pomfret did the same ;  
 Let its wild flavour pass a line so tame ;)—  
 A wife,—or whatsoever better word  
 The times, grown wiser, might by law afford  
 To the chief friend and partner of my board.  
 The dear, good she, by every habit then,—  
 Ties e'en when pleasant, very strong with men ;  
 Though your wise heads first make one's systems wrong,  
 And then insist that only their's last long,—  
 Would finish, and make round in every part,  
 The natural harmony of her own wise heart ;  
 And by the loss of something of her right  
 Of being jealous, consummate delight.  
 Gods ! how I'd love her morning, noon, and night !  
 I'd only know the women she approved,  
 But then she'd love all those who should be loved :  
 So that our fair friends, better still than good,  
 Should crown, like doves, our gentle neighbourhood ;

And bring us back the peace the world has lost,  
All fav'rites and beloved, though one the most.  
Should doubts arise, and want of explanations,  
We'd settle all by little gifts and patience ;  
But, there could not be much 'twixt real friends,  
Taught to consult each other's common ends :  
And as for passions of a graver sort,  
Kisses and shakes of hand should cut them short.  
Should any one incur the common grief,  
By moods that asked and yet repelled relief,  
Long tears and the remorseless handkerchief,  
One pain well borne for friendship's and love's sake  
Should gather to our arms the wanderer back :--  
It should be our fixed law, no loving heart should ache.

I'd have my mornings to myself. Ev'n ladies  
Should not prevent me this, except on May-days :  
Unless we fairly struck our tents awhile,  
To stroll, like gypsies, round about the isle ;  
A plan I might be bent on, I confess,  
Provided colds would give us leave, and dress,  
And twenty other inconveniences.  
I'd give up even my house to live like them,  
And have a health in every look and limb,  
To which our best perceptions must be dim.  
A gypsy's body, and a poet's mind,  
Clear blood, quick foot, free spirit, and thought refined,  
Perpetual airs to breathe, and loves to bind,—  
Such were the last perfection of mankind.

I'd have my mornings to myself then ; calm,  
Clear, useful, busy, like distilling balm.  
The spirit of the genial text I own ;

But yet 'tis sometimes "for man to be alone."  
 It makes him feel his own free powers ; put forth  
 All the glad fruitage that his heart is worth ;  
 And should his fellows fall to their green tombs,  
 Enables him to take the storm that comes,  
 And sternly rouse his locks, and stand the driving glooms.  
 Alas ! too late have I learnt this.—Be strong,  
 Be strong, my boughs, and still allure a tranquillizing song !

These mornings, with their work, should earn for me  
 My afternoon's content and liberty.  
 I'd have an early dinner, and a plain,  
 Not tempting much to " cut and come again ;"  
 A little wine, or not, as health allowed,  
 But for my friends, a stock to make me proud ;  
 Bottles of something delicate and rare,  
 Which I should draw, and hold up with an air,  
 And set them on the table, and say, " There !"  
 My friend the doctor (not the apothecary,  
 For they and doctors eminently vary ;  
 Doctors, I mean, such as the Muses love,  
 And with the liberal more than hand and glove,\*)  
 Should draw on these for med'cines for the poor,  
 And our delicious fee should be the cure.  
 Perhaps I'd make him give me a degree  
 Myself, and practise out of jealousy.  
 Oh Garth ! Oh Goldsmith ! Oh ye sons of theirs,  
 In wit, or in wise heart; your real heirs,  
 And yod the most, ever yourself, and true

\* I am told by a surgeon's knowwoman, that I ought to include surgeons ; which I do with a great deal of pleasure. I mean, in short, all medical men, who are not ignorant and rapacious ; not excepting the mere apothecary, if he happens to be one of them.

To your old patients and new duties, too,  
 Whom my soul thanks, and, if it might, would bless,  
 To all the world with trembling tenderness,—  
 How meanly do I rate your brethren's arts,  
 How highly your's, and how like gems your hearts !  
 Gems deeply cut with Phœbus and the Nine :  
 May never sorrow shatter them like mine !

See—I'm at least a promising beginner,  
 And, out of pure good will, have left my dinner.

My dining-room should have some shelves of books,  
 If only for their grace and social looks—  
 Horace and Plutarch, Plato, and some more,  
 Who knew how to refine the tables' roar,  
 And sprinkled sweet philosophy between,  
 As meats are reconciled with slips of green.  
 I read infallibly, if left alone ;  
 But after meat, an author may step down  
 To settle a dispute, or talk himself :—  
 I seem to twitch him now with finger from his shelf.

I would not sit in the same room to dine  
 And pass the evening ; much less booze till nine,  
 And then, with a white waistcoat and red face,  
 Rise, with some stupid, mumbling, common place,  
 And " join the ladies," bowing, for some tea,  
 With nauseous looks, half lust, half irony.  
 I'd have two rooms, in one of which, as weather  
 Or fancy chose, we all might come together,  
 With liberty for each one nevertheless  
 To wander in and out, and taste the lawns and trees.  
 One of the rooms should face a spot of spots,

Such as would please a squirrel with his nuts ;  
 I mean a slope, looking upon a slope,  
 Wood-crowned, and delled with turf, a sylvan cup.  
 Here, when our moods were quietest, we'd praise  
 The scenic shades, and watch the doves and jays,  
 And so receive the twilight with low talk,  
 And moon, slow issuing to her maiden walk.  
 The other sitting-room, a story higher,  
 Should look out towards the road and village spire ;  
 And here we'd have our music and our mirth,  
 And seem as if we laughed with the whole rolling earth.

Next there, and looking out on either side,  
 I'd have " a little chapel edified,"  
 Informed with heads of those who, heavenly wise,  
 Through patient thought or many sympathies,  
 Lived betwixt heaven and earth, and bore for us  
 Dire thirsty deaths, or drank the deadly juice.  
 Greek beauty should be there, and Gothic shade ;  
 And brave as anger, gentle as a maid,  
 The name on whose dear heart my hope's worn cheek was laid :  
 Here, with a more immediate consciousness,  
 Would we feel all that blesses us, and bless ;  
 And lean on one another's heart, and make  
 Sweet resolutions, ever, for love's sake ;  
 And recognise the eternal Good and Fair,  
 Atoms of whose vast active spirit we are ;  
 And try by what great yearnings we could force  
 The globe on which we live to take a more harmonious course.

And when I died, 'twould please me to be laid  
 In my own ground's most solitary shade ;  
 Not for the gloom, much less to be alone,

But solcly as a room that still might seem my own.  
There should my friends come still, as to a place  
That held me yet, and bring me a kind face :  
There should they bring me still their griefs and joys,  
And hear in the swell'd breeze a little answering noise.  
Had I renown enough, I'd choose to lie,  
As Hafiz did, bright in the public eye,  
With marble grace enclosed, and a green shade,  
And young and old should read me, and be glad.  
This for mankind, and one who loves them all :  
But should my own pure pleasure guide the pall,  
Then to the bed of my affections, where  
My best friends lay, should its calm steps repair ;  
And two such vistas to my travail's end  
Before me now with gathering looks attend :  
One, in a gentle village, my old home ;  
The other, by the softened walls of Rome.



## GIOVANNI VILLANI.

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AMONG the many accusations that have been made against modern writers by the exclusive lovers of ancient literature, none has been more frequently repeated than the want of art manifested in the conception of their works, and of unity in the execution. They compare the Greek temples to Gothic churches, and bidding us remark the sublime simplicity of the one, and the overcharged ornament of the other, they tell us, that such is the perfection of antiquity compared with the monstrous distortions of modern times. These arguments and views, followed up in all their details, have given rise to volumes concerning the Classic and the Romantic, a difference much dwelt on by German writers, and treated at length by Madame de Staël in her "*L'Allemagne*." All readers, who happen at the same time to be thinkers, must have formed their own opinion of this question; but assuredly the most reasonable is that which would lead us to admire the beauties of all, referring those beauties to the standard of excellence that must decide on all merit in the highest resort, without reference to narrow systems and arbitrary rules. Methinks it is both presumptuous and sacrilegious to pretend to give the law to genius. We are too far removed from the point of perfection to judge with accuracy of what ought to be, and it is sufficient if we understand and feel what is. The fixed stars appear to abberate; but it is we that move, not they. The regular planets make various



excursions into the heavens, and we are told that some among them never return to the point whence they departed, and by no chance ever retrace the same path in the pathless sky. Let us, applying the rules which appertain to the sublimest objects in nature, to the sublimest work of God, a Man of Genius,—let us, I say, conclude, that though one of this species appear to err, the failure is in our understandings, not in his course; and though lines and rules, “centric and eccentric scribbled o’er,” have been marked out for the wise to pursue, that these in fact have generally been the leading-strings and go-carts of mediocrity, and have never been constituted the guides of those superior minds which are themselves the law, and whose innate impulses are the fiats, of intellectual creation.

But zeal for the cause of genius has carried me further than I intended. Let us again recur to the charges brought against modern writers, and instead of cavilling at their demerits, let me be pardoned if I endeavour to discover that which is beautiful even in their defects, and to point out the benefits we may reap in the study of the human mind from this capital one—the want of unity and system.

It is a frequent fault among modern authors, and peculiarly among those of the present day, to introduce themselves, their failings and opinions, into the midst of works dedicated to objects sufficiently removed, as one might think, from any danger of such an incursion. This has sometimes the effect of a play-house anecdote I once heard, of a man missing his way behind the scenes, in passing from one part of the house to the other, and suddenly appearing in his hat and unpicturesque costume, stalking amidst the waves of a frightful storm, much to the annoyance of the highly-wrought feelings of the spectators of the impending catastrophe of a disastrous melodrame. Thus the Poet, in propria personâ,

will elbow his way between the despairing fair one and her agitated lover; he will cause a murderer's arm to be uplifted till it ought to ache, and his own hobby will sometimes displace the more majestic quadruped that just before occupied the scene.

These are the glaring defects of the intrusion of self in a work of art. But well-managed, there are few subjects, especially in poetry, that excite stronger interest or elicit more beautiful lines. To sit down for the purpose of talking of oneself, will sometimes freeze the warmth of inspiration; but, when elevated and carried away by the subject in hand, some similitude or contrast may awaken a chord which else had slept, and the whole mind will pour itself into the sound; and he must be a critic such as Sterne describes, his stop-watch in his hand, who would arrest the lengthened echo of the deepest music of the soul. Let each man lay his hand on his heart and say, if Milton's reference to his own blindness and personal circumstances does not throw an interest over *Paradise Lost*, which they would not lose to render the work as much no man's or any man's production as the *Æneid*—supposing *Ille ego* to be an interpolation, which I fondly trust it is not.

This habit of self-analysis and display has also caused many men of genius to undertake works where the individual feeling of the author imbues the whole subject with a peculiar hue. I have frequently remarked, that these books are often the peculiar favourites among men of imagination and sensibility. Such persons turn to the human heart as the undiscovered country. They visit and revisit their own; endeavour to understand its workings, to fathom its depths, and to leave no lurking thought or disguised feeling in the hiding places where so many thoughts and feelings, for fear

of shocking the tender consciences of those inexperienced in the task of self-examination, delight to seclude themselves. As a help to the science of self-knowledge, and also as a continuance of it, they wish to study the minds of others, and particularly of those of the greatest merit. The sight of land was not more welcome to Columbus, than are these traces of individual feeling, chequering their more formal works of art, to the voyagers in the noblest of terræ incognitæ, the soul of man. Sometimes, despairing to attain to a knowledge of the secrets of the best and wisest, they are pleased to trace human feeling wherever it is artlessly and truly portrayed. No book perhaps has been oftener the vade-mecum of men of wit and sensibility than Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*; the zest with which it is read being heightened by the proof the author gave in his death of his entire initiation into the arcana of his science. The essential attributes of such a book must be truth; for else the fiction is more tame than any other; and thus Sterne may become this friend to the reading man, but his imitators never can; for affectation is easily detected and deservedly despised. Montaigne is another great favourite; his pages are referred to as his conversation would be, if indeed his conversation was half so instructive, half so amusing, or contained half so vivid a picture of his internal spirit as his essays. Rousseau's *Confessions*, written in a more liberal and even prodigal spirit of intellectual candour, is to be ranked as an inestimable acquisition to this class of production. Boswell's *Life of Johnson* has the merit of carrying light into the recesses not of his own, but another's peculiar mind. Spence's *Anecdotes* is a book of the same nature, but less perfect in its kind. Half the beauty of Lady Mary Montague's *Letters* consists in the *P* that adorns them; and this *I*, this sensitive, imagi-

native, suffering, enthusiastic pronoun, spreads an inexpressible charm over Mary Wollstonecraft's *Letters from Norway*. \* .

An historian is perhaps to be held least excusable, if he intrude personally on his readers. Yet they might well follow the example of Gibbon, who, while he left the pages of his *Decline and Fall* unstained by any thing that is not applicable to the times of which he treated, has yet, through the medium of his *Life and Letters*, given a double interest to his history and opinions. Yet an author of *Memoirs*, or a *History of his own Times*, must necessarily appear sometimes upon the scene. Mr. Hyde gives greater interest to Lord Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, though I have often regretted that a quiet *I* had not been inserted in its room.

And now drawing the lines of this reasoning together, it may be conjectured why I like, and how I would excuse, the dear, rambling, old fashioned pages of Giovanni Villani, the author of the *Croniche Fiorentine*; the writer who makes the persons of Dante's *Spirits* familiar to us; who guides us through the unfinished streets and growing edifices of Firenze la bella, and who in short transports us back to the superstitions, party spirit, companionship, and wars of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Dante's commentators had made me familiar with the name of Villani, and I became desirous of obtaining what appeared to be the key of the mysterious allusions of the *Divina Comedia*. There is something venerable and endearing in the very appearance of this folio of the sixteenth century. The Italian is old and delightfully ill-spelt: I say delightfully, for it is spelt for

\* I cannot help here alluding to the papers of "Elia," which have lately appeared in a periodical publication. When collected together, they must rank among the most beautiful and highly valued specimens of the kind of writing spoken of in the text.

Italian ears, and the mistakes let one into the secret of the pronunciation of Dante and Petrarch better than the regular orthography of the present day. The abbreviations are many, and the stops in every instance misplaced; the ink is black, the words thickly set, so that the most seems to have been made of every page. It requires a little habit to read it with the same fluency as another book, but when this difficulty is vanquished, it acquires additional charms from the very labour that has been bestowed.

I know that in describing the outward appearance of my friend, I perform a thankless office, since few will sympathise in an affection which arises from a number of associations in which they cannot participate. But in developing the spirit that animates him, I undertake a more grateful task, although, by stripping him of his original garb and dressing him in a foreign habiliment, I divest him of one of his greatest beauties. Though in some respects rather old fashioned, his Italian is still received as a model of style; and those Italians who wish to purify their language from Gallicisms, and restore to it some of its pristine strength and simplicity, recur with delight to his pages. All this is lost in the English; but even thus I trust that his facts will interest, his simplicity charm, and his real talent be appreciated.

In the course of his work, Villani thus recounts the motives that induced him to commence his history:—

“ In the year 1300, according to the nativity of Christ, on account of its having been said by many, that in former times, every hundred years after the nativity of Christ, he that was pope at that period gave great indulgencies, Pope Boniface VIII, who then held the Apostolic office, through reverence for the same, gave a great and high indulgence in this manner: that whatsoever believer visited during all that

year continuously for thirty days (and fifteen days for strangers who were not Romans) the churches of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, to all these he gave full and entire pardon, both of sin and punishment, for all their sins confessed or to be confessed; and for the consolation of Christian pilgrims, every Friday and holiday, the Veronica del Sudario of Christ was exhibited at St. Peter's. On this account a great part of the then existing Christians performed this said journey, both men and women, from distant and diverse countries, both far and near. And it was the most wonderful thing that ever was, that, during a whole year there were in Rome, besides the people of the city, two hundred thousand pilgrims, without including those on the road going and coming; and all were well furnished and satisfied with all manner of food, as well the houses as the persons; and this I can witness, who was there present, and saw much accrued to the Church from the offerings of the pilgrims, and all the Roman people became rich through the commerce occasioned by them. I, being at the Holy City of Rome, on account of this blessed pilgrimage, observing the magnificent and ancient things there, and knowing the great achievements and history of the Romans, written by Sallust, Lucan, Titus Livius, Valerius, Paul Orosius, and other masters of history, who narrated small occurrences as well as great, and even those that happened at the extremities of the universal world, to give note and example to those to come after them; and although, with regard to their style and order, I was not a disciple worthy the doing so great a work, yet, considering our city of Florence, the daughter and creature of Rome, which had achieved high things in her ascent, and was now, like Rome, on her decline, it appeared to me to be right to collect in this volume a new Chronicle of all the deeds and ordinances of

that city; and as much as was in me to seek, find, and narrate past, present, and future times, while it shall please God. So that I shall recount at large the deeds of the Florentines, and all other famous events of the universal world, as far as I can learn, God giving me grace, in hope of which I began this enterprize, considering the poverty of my talent, on which I should not have dared rely. And thus, through the grace of Christ, having returned from Rome in his year 1300, I began to compile this book, in reverence to God and the blessed Messer Santo John, in commendation of the city of Florence.”—(Book VIII. Cap. 36.)

Villani begins his history with the Tower of Babel and the confusion of tongues; and then relates how king Atalante, the fifth in descent from Japhet, the son of Noah, colonized in Italy and built the town of Fiesole. He commemorates the siege of Troy, and how Antenor and the younger Priam came over to Italy, and severally built the towns of Padua and Venice; and that the descendants of the latter became kings of Germany and France. The history of Rome is slightly skimmed over, and he mentions that, after the discovery of Catiline's plot, several of the conspirators entrenched themselves in Fiesole, which was accordingly besieged by the following leaders: “Count Rainaldo, Cicero, Tiberinus, Machrimus, Albinus, Cn. Pompeius, Cæsar Camertinus, Count Seggio, Tudertino, that is of the Soli, who was with Julius Cæsar and his army.” Under such an assemblage of generals Fiesole fell, and Florence arose from its ruins.

But these strange anachronisms and unfounded fables, though made amusing by the gravity and minuteness of Villani, are not the qualities which constitute his principal merit. He grows more interesting and more authentic as he advances from the creation of the world to his own times;

and nine-tenths of his book are occupied by the narration of events which occurred during the course of his own life. He describes characters in the style of one well-read in human nature, and who, by living at a period when civil discord awakened the most violent passions and disclosed the workings of the heart carefully veiled for our politer eyes, and by mingling in the game where each the smallest individual risked fortune, family and life,—had penetrated into every diversity of character. His anecdotes make us familiarly acquainted with the private habits and ways of thinking of those times; his accounts of civil commotions and wars are worthy of that which he was—an eye-witness. It is true, that in the midst of grave matter of fact, the strangest stories will force their way. I own that these digressions are to me by no means the least pleasant part of his work, and as they are disjoined from the rest of his history, they by no means injure his character of an exact historian, which stands high on all matters appertaining to Italy and his immediate times. I confess that while reading a spirited narration of the Battle of the Arbia, or the murder of Buondelmonti and the rise of parties in Florence, or any other historic fact of the kind, I come with pleasure to a chapter entitled—"How the Tartars first left the mountains where Alexander the Great had confined them," and read under that head the following wild and poetic story:—

"In the year of Christ 1202, the people called Tartars came out from the mountains of Gog and Magog, called in Latin the mountains of Belgen. This people are said to have descended from that tribe of Israel which the great Alexander, king of Greece, who conquered all the world, shut up in these mountains, on account of their wicked life (*per loro brutta vita*) that they might not mix with the other gene-



rations. And through their cowardice and vain credulity, they remained shut up from the time of Alexander until this period, believing that the army of this king still surrounded them. For he, with wonderful mechanism, commanded immense trumpets to be made, and placed on the mountains, which every wind caused to sound and trumpet forth with a great noise. Afterwards, it is said, that owls built their nests in the mouths of those trumpets, which put an end to the artifice by stopping the sound: and on this account the Tartars have owls in great reverence, and their principal lords wear the feathers of owls, by way of ornament, in their caps, in memory that they caused to cease the sound of these trumpets. For this circumstance reassured the people, who lived in the manner of animals, and were of innumerable numbers; so certain among them passed the mountains and finding no enemy on their summits, but only this vain sound of these tower-exalted trumpets, they descended to the plains of India, which were fertile, fruitful, and of a mild climate; and returning and reporting this news to their families and the rest of the people, they assembled together, and made, through divine intervention, a poor blacksmith called Cangius their general and lord. And when he was made lord, he received the name of "Cane," that is the emperor in their language. He was a valourous and wise man; and through his wisdom and valour he divided the people into tens, hundreds, and thousands, under captains fitted to the command. And first, he ordered all his principal subjects to kill their first-born sons, and when he found himself obeyed in this, he issued his command to his people, entered India, vanquished Prester John, and conquered all his country." (Book V. Cap. 27.)

Villani was a Guelph, that is, an adherent to the papal and republican party. He repeats all the calumnies that

had been invented to prejudice the Italians against the house of Swabia, and he appears to believe the miracles and dreams of various pontiffs with catholic credulity. One of his principal heroes is Charles d'Anjou, a cruel, faithless, but heroic tyrant; and it is thus that he paints his character with the partiality of a partizan, and the lively touches of one personally acquainted with the character whom he hands down to posterity:—

“ Charles was wise and prudent, brave in arms, severe, and much feared and redoubted by all the kings in the world; magnanimous, and of high spirit to carry on any great enterprize, firm in adversity, secure and veracious in keeping his promises, speaking little and doing much. He seldom laughed, if ever; chaste as a monk, and catholically religious. As a judge he was merciless, and of ferocious aspect. He was tall and strongly made, of an olive complexion, with a large nose; and he appeared far more majestic than any other lord. He watched much, and slept little; using to say, that sleeping was so much time lost. He was generous as a knight of arms, but desirous of acquiring lands, dominion, and wealth, whence he might provide for his enterprizes and wars. He never took delight in *uomini di corte, courtiers and games.*” (Book VII. Cap 1.)

History does not present in any of her pages so strong a contrast as that between the characters of the rivals for the crown of Naples. Manfred was the natural son of Frederic, the last Emperor of the house of Swabia. Refusing to bow the neck to the yoke of papal tyranny, three successive Pontiffs pursued him with unbending malignity and hatred; they at length bestowed his kingdom upon Charles d'Anjou, and invited him over to conquer it. It is hardly fair to give the character of the intrepid, noble, and unfortunate Manfred in the words of his enemy, for such Villani was. But the

actions of these two princes are a comment upon the words of the historian, and enable us to form an impartial opinion. "This same king Manfred," says Villani, "was the son of a beautiful woman belonging to the Marquess Lancia of Lombardy, to whom the Emperor was attached. He was a handsome man like his father, but dissolute and luxurious in the extreme; he was a musician, a singer, and was pleased to see buffoons and *uomini di corte*; he kept mistresses, and always dressed in green. He was generous and courteous, and of noble demeanour, so that he was much beloved and followed; but his life was epicurean; scarcely believing in God (*for God read the Pope*) or his saints; he was an enemy of holy church and of priests; was a greater confis-  
cator of church riches than his father: he was rich, through the treasure left by the Emperor and by king Conrad, and because his kingdom was fruitful and abundant. And while he lived at war with the church, he rendered his kingdom prosperous, and so rose to great dominion and riches by sea and land. He had for wife the daughter of the despot of Romania (the Emperor of Constantinople) by whom he had several children."—(Book VIth, Cap. 47.)

The great crime of Manfred consisted in his forming a small army of Saracens, whom he used to defend himself against his papal enemies, who were devotedly attached to him, and by whose means he had risen to dominion again, after he had been reduced to flight and impotence. Even in the above garbled account of the noblest king and the most accomplished cavalier that ever existed, we may trace his excellencies. His kingdom prosperous, himself adored by his subjects, we may excuse his love for courtly amusements; and beloved by his wife, we may doubt the excess of less pardonable faults. The actions of Charles are a long list of crimes. He involved Naples in a bloody war, and shewed no mercy to the van-

quished. After the death of Manfred, who happily for himself died on the field of battle, his wife Sibilla, whose high birth Villani has commemorated, and her children, were imprisoned in Calabria, and there, as this partial historian shortly narrates (*da Carlo fatto morire*) put to death by Charles. Every noble partisan of Manfred lost his life on the scaffold, and the line of unfortunate victims was closed by the young and gallant Coradino. His newly conquered kingdom was driven to desperation by his extortions and cruelties, and the Sicilian vespers at length delivered that miserable island from his merciless gripe. Such was the catholicly religious Charles.

But to return to Villani: although a violent party-man, he dwells with fond regret on the time when there was neither Guelph nor Ghibeline in Florence. "It is from these names," he says "that great evil and ruin fell upon our city, as mention will hereafter be made: and we may well believe, that it will never have an end, if God does not terminate it." This (as it were) figure of speech, of recurring to the good old times, is common to all recorders of the past, from Homer downwards. But it is more natural in Villani, since he himself beheld the festive meetings of his countrymen changed into murderous brawls, and after having seen all that claimed the common name of Florentines live in brotherly anity, he witnessed the irremediable rent which divided them into Guelph and Ghibeline, the palaces of Florence razed through the violence of party, and the estates of the vanquished confiscated. Examples of the rich and happy becoming poor and wretched were familiar to him, and the further sting was added, that these calamities were not occasioned by what may be called the natural evils of life—neither by pestilence, war, nor famine—but by civil discord, originating in words only, and where the wisest and best, branded by a

name, became the victims of the new-born hatred of former friends.

After the manner of Livy, Villani delights to tell of monsters, of comets, of meteors, and portents. In one place he tells us how "Philip le Bel, king of France, caused to be made prisoners all the Italians in that kingdom, under pretence of taking usurers; but at the same time he caused to be taken, and liberated only upon ransom, many honest merchants as usurers; for this he was much blamed and hated, and henceforward the kingdom of France went declining, falling, and coming from bad to worse."

Perhaps the best idea that I can present of the general nature of this book, will be in giving some of the heads of the chapters in the order they occur. As for instance:—(Book VIII. Cap. 12.) "How the nobles of the city of Florence took arms to destroy and oppress the popular government." (Cap. 13.) "How Pope Boniface made peace between king Charles, and the Florentines, and Don Giamo of Arragon, king of Sicily." (Cap. 14.) "How the Guelph party was driven out of Genoa." (Cap. 15.) "Of certain novelties and changes that arrived among the lords of Tartary." (Book IX. Cap. 291.) "How a new small money was coined at Florence." (Cap. 292.) "Of a miraculous fall of snow in Tuscany." (Cap. 293.) "How Castruccio endeavoured to betray Florence." (Cap. 294.) "How there was accord between some of the elected lords in Germany." (Cap. 295.) "How Castruccio, lord of Lucca, possessed himself of the city of Pistria, by means of treason." (Cap. 296.) "How Messer Raimondo of Cardona came to Florence, as Captain of War." (Cap. 297.) "How the Duke of Calabria, with a great army, made a descent upon the Island of Sicily." (Cap. 298.) "Of signs that appeared in the air, which," as Villani says, "made all who saw them, dread future danger and troubles in the city."

I will conclude ~~my~~ extracts and remarks by his chapter upon the death, character, and writings of Dante.

*Book IX. Of the Poet Dante, and how he died. (Cap. 135.)*

"In this same year (1321) in the month of July, Dante died at the city of Ravenna, in Romagna, having returned from an embassy to Venice in the service of the lords of Polénta, with whom he lived. He was buried with great honour, in the guise of poet and great philosopher, at Ravenna, before the gate of the principal church. He died, an exile from the commune of Florence, at the age of about fifty-six years. This Dante was an antient and honourable citizen of Florence, of the division of the gate of San Piero. His exile from Florence was thus occasioned. When Messer Carlo di Valois, of the house of France, came to Florence in the year 1301, and exiled the *Bianchi* (a party so called) as we have before related, this same Dante was the highest governor of our city, and of that party, though a Guelph.\* And thus, free from guilt, he was driven out with the *Bianchi*, and exiled from Florence, whence he retired to study at Bologna, and afterwards to Paris, and other parts of the world. He was very learned in almost every science, though a layman; he was a great poet, a philosopher, and a perfect rhetorician, as well in writing, either prose or verse, as in speaking. He was

\* Villani, who was townsman and contemporary of Dante, appears to have also been his friend, and to wish to reinstate him in the good graces of the Florentines, by saying that he was a Guelph. Dante, as a reasonable man, endeavoured to reconcile the absurd differences of all parties, but he was not a Guelph. His discrepancy of opinion from Villani may be gathered from the opposite judgments that they pass on the same persons. The poet prepares a choice place of torture for Boniface VIII in his dreary hell, while Villani exalts him as a saint. Dante rails at all the Popes; Villani respects them all. Dante sweetly and pathetically dwells on the wrongs and virtues of Manfred, and places him on the high road to heaven. Villani vituperates him, and consigns him as a *scomunicato* to the devil.

the noblest maker of verses, with the finest style, that had ever been in our language until his own time and later. He wrote in his youth the beautiful book of the "New Life of Love," and afterwards, when in exile, he wrote twenty excellent moral and amatory *canzoni*. Among other things he wrote three noble epistles; one of which he sent to the government of Florence, mourning his banishment as an innocent man; the other he sent to the Emperor Henry (of Luxembourg) when he was at the siege of Brescia, reprehending his abiding there, with almost the foreknowledge of a prophet: the third was to the Italian Cardinals during the vacancy after Pope Clement, advising them to accord in the election of an Italian Pope, all in Latin, in magnificent language, with excellent sentences and authorities, the which were much praised by the holy men who understood them. He wrote also the *Comedia*, where, in elegant verse, with great and subtle questions of morality, natural philosophy, astrology, philosophy and theology, and with beautiful and new metaphors and similes, he composed an hundred chapters or cantos, of having been in Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise, in as noble a manner as it is possible to have done. But in this discourse, whoever is of a penetrating understanding may well see and comprehend that he greatly loves in that drama to dispute and vituperate, after the manner of poets, perhaps in some places more than is decent. Probably his exile also made him write his Treatise on Monarchy,\* where in excellent Latin he treats of the offices of Pope and Emperor. He

\* I must again remark, that Dante and Villani must have been personal friends, or that reverence for the poet's talent made the latter seek for every circumstance that might excuse the opinions of Dante to the Florentines, who were then all Guelphs, and to whom the Treatise on Monarchy was peculiarly interesting.

began a comment upon fourteen of his before-mentioned moral *canzoni*, which, on account of his death, he did not finish; and only three were found, the which, from what we see, would have been a great, beautiful, subtle, and eminent work. He also wrote a book entitled, “of Vulgar Eloquence”—which, he says, was to consist of four books, but only two are found, probably on account of his unexpected death, where, in strong and elegant Latin, he reprobates all vernacular Italian. This Dante, on account of his knowledge, was somewhat presumptuous, satirical, and contemptuous. He was uncourteous, as it were, after the manner of philosophers; nor did he well know how to converse with laymen. But on account of his other virtues, his science, and his merit as a citizen, it appeared just to give him perpetual memorial in this our Chronicle, although his great works left in writing bestow on him a true testimony, and an honourable fame on our city.”





## PULPIT ORATORY.

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DR. CHALMERS AND MR. IRVING

THE Scotch at present seem to bear the bell, and to have “got the start of the majestic world.” They boast of the greatest novelists, the greatest preachers, the greatest philanthropists, and the greatest blackguards in the world. Sir Walter Scott stands at the head of these for Scotch humour, Dr. Chalmers for Scotch logic, Mr. Owen for Scotch Utopianism, and Mr. Blackwood for Scotch impudence. Unrivalled four! Nay, here is Mr. Irving, who threatens to make a fifth, and *stultify* all our London orators, from “kingly Kensington” to Blackwall! Who has not heard of him? Who does not go to hear him? You can scarcely move along for the coronet-coaches that besiege the entrance to the Caledonian chapel in Hatton-garden; and when, after a prodigious squeeze, you get in so as to have standing-room, you see in the same undistinguished crowd Brougham and Mackintosh, Mr. Peel and Lord Liverpool, Lord Landsdown, and Mr. Coleridge. Mr. Canning and Mr. Hone are pew fellows, Mr. Waithman frowns stern applause, and Mr. Alderman Wood does the honours of the Meeting! The lamb lies down with the lion, and the Millennium seems to be anticipated in the Caledonian chapel, under the new Scotch preacher. Lords, ladies, sceptics, fanatics, join in approbation,—some admire the doctrine, others the sound, some the picturesque appearance of the

orator, others the grace of action, some the ingenuity of the argument, others the beauty of the style or the bursts of passion, some even go so far as to patronize a certain *brackish* infusion of the Scottish dialect, and a slight defect of vision. Lady Bluemount declares it to be only inferior to the *Excursion* in imagination, and Mr. Botherby cries—"Good, good!" The "Talking Potato"\* and Mr. Theodore Flash have not yet been.

Mr. Irving appears to us the most accomplished barbarian, and the least offensive and most dashing clerical holder-forth we remember to have seen. He puts us in

\* Some years ago, a periodical paper was published in London, under the title of the *PIC-NIC*. It was got up under the auspices of a Mr. Fulke Greville, and several writers of that day contributed to it, among whom were Mr. Horace Smith, Mr. Dubois, Mr. Prince Hoare, Mr. Cumberland, and others. On some dispute arising between the proprietor and the gentlemen-contributors on the subject of an advance in the remuneration for articles, Mr. Fulke Greville grew heroic, and said, "I have got a young fellow just come from Ireland, who will undertake to do the whole, verse and prose, politics and scandal, for two guineas a week, and if you will come and sup with me to-morrow night, you shall see him, and judge whether I am not right in closing with him." Accordingly, they met the next evening, and the *WRITER OF ALL WORK* was introduced. He began to make a display of his native ignorance and unpudence on all subjects immediately, and no one else had occasion to say any thing. When he was gone, Mr. Cumberland exclaimed, "A talking potato, by God!" The talking potato was Mr. Croker, of the Admiralty. Our adventurer shortly, however, returned to his own country, and passing accidentally through a town where they were in want of a ministerial candidate at an Election, the gentleman of modest assurance offered himself, and succeeded. "They wanted a Jack-pudding," said the father of the hopeful youth, "and so they chose my son." The case of the Duke of York and Mrs. Clarke soon after came on, and Mr. Croker, who is a dabbler in dirt, and an adept in love-letters, rose from the *Secretary to the Admiralty*, and the very "rose and expectancy of the *Salt State*."

mind of the first man, Adam, if Adam had but been a Scotchman, and had had coal black hair. He seems to stand up in the integrity of his composition, to begin a new race of practising believers, to give a new impulse to the Christian religion, to regenerate the fallen and degenerate race of man. You would say he had been turned out of the hands of Nature and the Schools a perfect piece of workmanship. See him in the street, he has the air, the free-swing, the *bolt upright* figure of an Indian savage, or a northern borderer dressed in canonicals: set him in the pulpit, and he is armed with all the topics, a master of fence, the pupil of Dr. Chalmers! In action he has been compared to Kean; in the union of external and intellectual advantages, we might start a parallel for him in the admirable Chrichton. He stands before Haydon's picture of Lazarus, and says, "Look at me!" He crosses Piccadilly, and clears Bond-street of its beaux! Rob Roy, Macbriar is come again. We saw him stretched on a bench at the Black Bull in Edinburgh,—we met him again at a thirteen-penny ordinary in London, in the same attitude, and said, without knowing his calling, or his ghostly parts, "That is the man for a fair saint." We swear it by

" His foot mercurial; his martial thigh,  
The brawns of Hercules, but his jovial thigh!"

Aye, there we stop like Imogen—there is a want of expression in it. "The iron has not entered his soul." He has not dared to feel but in trammels and in dread. He has read *Werter* but to criticise him; *Rousseau*, but to steel himself against him; *Shakespear*, but to quote him; *Milton*, but to round his periods. Pleasure, ~~fanny~~ <sup>fanny</sup>, humanity, are syrens that he repels and keeps at arms-length; and hence his features are hardened, and have a barbaric crust upon them. They are

not steeped in the expression of Titian or Raphael; but they would do for Spagnoletti to paint, and his dark profile and matted locks have something of the grave commanding appearance of Leonardo da Vinci's massive portraits.

Dr. Chalmers is not so good-looking a man as Mr. Irving; he wants the same vigour and spirit. His face is dead and clammy, cold, pale, bloodless, passionless, and there is a glazed look of insincerity about the eyes, uninformed, uninspired from within. His voice is broken, harsh, and creaking, while Mr. Irving's is flowing and silvery: his Scotch accent and pronunciation are a terrible infliction on the *uncultivated* ear. His "Which observation I oorge upon you my frinds and breethren" desolates and lays waste all the humanities. He grinds out his sentences between his teeth, and catches at truth with his fists, as a monkey catches an apple or a stick thrown at him with his paws. He seems by his action and his utterance to say to difficulties, "Come, let me clutch thee," and having got them in his grasp, tears and rends them in pieces as a dog tears an old rag to tatters or mumbles a stone that is flung in his way. Dr. Chalmers engages attention and secures sympathy solely by the intensity of his own purpose: there is neither eloquence nor wisdom, neither imagination nor feeling, neither the pomp of sound nor grace nor solemnity of manner about him, but he is in earnest, and eager in pursuit of his argument, and arrests the eye and ear of his congregation by this alone. He dashes headforemost into the briars and thorns of controversy, and drags you along with him whether you will or no, and your only chance is to push on and get out of them as well as you can, though dreadfully scratched and almost blinded. He involves you in a labyrinth, and you are anxious to escape from it: you have to pass through many a dark, subterranean cavern with him in his theological ferry-boat, and

are glad enough to get out on the other side, with the help of Scotch logic for oars, and Scotch rhetoric for sails! You hear no *home* truths, nothing that touches the heart, or swells or expands the soul; there is no tide of eloquence lifting you to Heaven, or wafting you from Indus to the Pole.—No, you are detained in a canal, with a great number of *locks* in it.—You make way by virtue of standing still, your will is irritated, and impelled forward by stoppages—you are puzzled into sympathy, pulled into admiration, tired into patience! The preacher starts a difficulty, of which you had no notion before, and you stare to see how he will answer it. He first makes you uneasy, sceptical, sensible of your helplessness and dependence upon his superior sagacity and recondite learning, and proportionably thankful for the relief he affords you in the unpleasant dilemma to which you have been reduced. It is like proposing a riddle, and then, after playing with the curiosity and impatience of the company for some time, giving the solution, which nobody else has the wit to find out. We never saw fuller attendances or more profound attention than at the Tron Church in Glasgow—it was like a sea of eyes, a swarm of heads, gaping for mysteries, and staring for elucidations—it was not the sublime or beautiful; the secret was that which has been here explained, a desire to get rid of the difficult, the disagreeable, the dry, and the discordant matter that had been conjured up in the imagination. Dr. Chalmers, then, succeeds by the force of sophistry and casuistry, in our humble judgment. Riddles (of which we spoke just now) are generally traditional: those that Dr. Chalmers unfolds from the pulpit, are of his own invention, or at least promulgation. He started an objection to the Christian religion (founded on its supposed inconsistency with the Newtonian philosophy) which objection had never been noticed in books, on pur-

pose that he might answer it. "Well," said a Scotchman, "and if the answer was a good one, was he not right?" "No, assuredly," we should answer, "for there is no faith so firm as that which has never been called in question." The answer could only satisfy those who had been unsettled by the question; and there would be many who would not be convinced by the Doctor's reasoning, however he might plume himself on his success. We suspect that this is looking after a reputation for literary ingenuity and philosophical depth, rather than the peace of consciences or the salvation of souls; which, in a Christian minister, is unbecoming, and savours of the Mammon of unrighteousness. We ourselves were staggered by the blow (either then or long before) and still gasp for a reply, notwithstanding Dr. Chalmers's nostrum. Let the reader briefly judge:—The Doctor tells us, it may be said, that the Christian Dispensation supposes that the counsels of God turn upon this world as its center; that there is a heaven above and an earth beneath; and that man is the lord of the universe, the only creature made in the divine likeness, and over whom Providence watches, and to whom revelations are given, and an inheritance everlasting. This agrees with the cosmogony of Moses, which makes the earth the center of all things, and the sun, moon, and stars, little shining spots like silver sixpences, moving round it. But it does not so well agree with Newton's *Principia* (we state Dr. Chalmers's objection) which supposes the globe we inhabit to be but a point in the immensity of the universe; that ours is but one, and that the most insignificant (perhaps) among innumerable worlds, filled, probably, with created intelligences, rational and fallen souls, that share the eye of God with us, and who require to know that their Redeemer liveth. We alone (it would appear) cannot pretend to monopolize heaven or hell: there are other contin-

gent candidates besides us. Jacob's dream was poetical and natural, while the earth was supposed to be a flat surface and the blue sky hung over it, to which angels might ascend by a ladder, and the face of God be seen at the top, as his lofty and unchangeable abode; but this beautiful episode hardly accords with the Antipodes. Sir Isaac turned the world upon its back, and divided heaven from itself, and removed it far from every one of us. As we thought the universe turned round the earth as its pivot, so religion turned round man as its center, as the sole, important, moral and accountable agent in existence. But there are other worlds revolving in infinite space, to which this is a speck. Are they all desert, worthless? Were they made for us? Have they no especial dispensations of life and light? Have we alone a God, a Saviour, revealed to us? Is religion triumphant only here, or is it itinerant through each? It can hardly seem that we alone have occupied the thoughts or been the sole objects of the plans of infinite wisdom from eternity—that our life, resurrection, and judgment to come, are the whole history of a wide-seeing Providence, or the loftiest events in the grand drama of the universe, which was got up as a theatre only for us to perform our petty parts in, and then to be cast, most of us, into hell fire? Dr. Chalmers's *Astronomical Discourses* indeed may be said to dwarf his mighty subject, and make mankind a very Lilliputian race of beings, which this Gulliver in vain dandles in the hard, broad, brawny hand of school divinity, and tries to lift into their bigotted self-sufficiency and exclusive importance again. How does he answer his own objection, and turn the tables on himself—how reverse this pitiful, diminished perspective, and aggrandise us in our own estimation once more as undoubted heirs of heaven or of hell—the sole favoured or reprobated sons of God? Why, his answer is this—that the



microscope has done as much to lift man in the scale of being, and to enlarge the bounds of this atom the earth, as the telescope has done to circumscribe and lessen it; that there are infinite gradations BELOW man, worlds within worlds, as there are degrees of being above, and stars and suns blazing round each other; that, for what we know, a speck, a lucid drop circulating in a flea's back, may be another habitable globe like this!—And has that, too, a revelation of its own, an avenging God, and a Christ crucified? Does every particle in a flea's back contain a Mosaic dispensation, a Popish and a Protestant religion? Has it its Tron church and its Caledonian chapel, and Dr. Chalmers's Discourses and Mr. Irving's Orations in little? This does not seem to obviate the difficulty, but to increase it a million-fold. It is his objection and his answer to it, not ours: if blasphemy, it is his; and, if orthodoxy, he is entitled to all the credit of it. But his whole scheme shows how impossible it is to reconcile the faith delivered to the saints with the subtleties and intricacies of metaphysics. It displays more pride of intellect than simplicity of heart, is an insult equally on the understandings or prejudices of men, and could only have been hit upon by that personification and abstraction of cross-purposes, a Scotch metaphysical divine. In his general preaching, Dr. Chalmers is a great casuist, and a very indifferent moralist. He states the *pros* and *cons* of every question with extreme pertinacity, and often "spins the thread of his verbosity finer than the staple of his argument." He assigns possible reasons, not practical motives, for conduct; and vindicates the ways of God, and his own interpretation of the Scriptures, to the head, not to the heart. The old school-divines set this practice afoot; for being accustomed to hear the secrets of confession, and to save the tender consciences of the great and powerful, they had to bandy all sorts of questions about;

and if they could find out "a loop or peg to hang a doubt on," were well rewarded for their trouble; they were constantly reduced to their shifts, and forced to go on the forlorn hope of morality by the ticklish cases referred to them for arbitration; and when they had exhausted the resources of humanity and natural sentiment, endeavoured to find new topics within the range of abstract reason and possibility. Dr. Chalmers's reasoning is as unlike as possible to a chapter in the Gospels: but he may do very well to comment on the Apocalypse or an Epistle of St. Paul's. We do not approve of this method of carving out excuses or defences of doctrinal points from the dry parchment of the understanding or the cobwebs of the brain. Whatever sets or leaves the dogmas of religion at variance with the dictates of the heart, hardens the last, and lends no advantage to the first.

Mr. Irving is a more amiable moralist, and a more practical reasoner. He throws a glancing, pleasing light over the gloomy ground of Calvinism. There is something humane in his appeals, striking in his apostrophes, graceful in his action, soothing in the tones of his voice. He is not affected and theatrical; neither is he deeply impassioned or overpowering from the simple majesty of his subject. He is above common-place both in fancy and argument; yet he can hardly rank as a poet or philosopher. He is a modernised covenanter, a sceptical fanatic. We do not feel exactly on sure ground with him—we scarcely know whether he preaches Christ crucified, or himself. His pulpit style has a resemblance to the *florid gothic*. We are a little *mystified* when a man with one hand brings us all the nice distinctions and air-drawn speculations of modern unbelievers, and arms the other with "fire hot from Hell,"—when St. Paul and Jeremy Bentham, the Evangelists and the Sorrows, of Werter, Seneca, Shakespear, the author of

Caleb Williams and the Political Justice, are mingled together in the same passage, and quoted in the same breath, however eloquent that breath may be. We see Mr. Irving smile with decent scorn at this remark, and launch one more thunderbolt at the critics. He is quite welcome, and we should be proud of his notice. In the discourses he has lately delivered, and which have drawn crowds to admire them, he has laboured to describe the Sensual Man, the Intellectual Man, the Moral Man, and the Spiritual Man; and has sacrificed the three first at the shrine of the last. He gave certainly a terrific picture of the death-bed of the Sensual Man—a scene where few shine—but it is a good subject for oratory, and he made the most of it. He described the Poet well, walking by the mountain side, in the eye of nature—yet oppressed, panting rather than satisfied, with beauty and sublimity. Neither Fame nor Genius, it is most true, are all-sufficient to the mind of man! He made a fair hit at the Philosophers; first, at the Political Economist, who draws a circle round man, gives him so many feet of earth to stand upon, and there leaves him to starve in all his nobler parts and faculties: next, at the Great Jurisconsult, who carves out a mosaic work of motives for him, cold, hard, and dry, and expects him to move mechanically in right lines, squares, and parallelograms, drills him into perfection, and screws him into utility. He then fell foul of the Moralist and Sentimentalist, weighed him in the balance and found him wanting—deficient in clearness of sight to discern good, in strength of hand and purpose to seize upon it when discerned. But Religion comes at last to the aid of the Spiritual Man, couches the blind sight, and braces the paralytic limb; the Lord of Hosts is in the field, and the battle is won, his countenance pours light into our souls,

and his hand stretched out imparts strength to us, by which we tower to our native skies! In treating of this subject, Mr. Irving introduced several powerful images and reflections, to show how feeble moral and intellectual motives are to contend with the allurements of sense and the example of the world. Reason alone, he said, was no more able to stem the tide of prejudice and fashion, than the swimmer with his single arm (here he used an appropriate and spirited gesture, which reminded us of the description of the heroic action of the swimmer in Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*) is able to oppose the raging torrent, as the voice of conscience was only heard in the tumultuous scenes of life like the faint cry of the sea-bird in the wide world of waters. He drew an animated but mortifying sketch of the progress of the Patriot and Politician, weaned by degrees from his attachment to young Liberty to hug old Corruption; and showed (strikingly enough) that this change from youthful ardour to a hoary, heartless old age of selfishness and ridicule (there were several Members of the Honourable House present) was not owing to increased wisdom or strength of sight, but to faltering resolution and weakness of hand, that could no longer hold out against the bribes, the snares, and gilded chains prepared for it. The romantic Tyro was right and free, the callous Courtier was a slave and self-conceited. All this was true; it was honest, downright, and well put. There was no cant in it, as far as regards the unequal odds and the hard battle that reason has to fight with pleasure, or ambition, or interest, or other antagonist motives. But does the objection apply to morality solely, or has not religion its share in it? Man is not what he ought to be—Granted; but is he not different from this ideal standard, in spite of religion as well as of morality? Is not the religious man often a slave to power,

the victim of pleasure, the thrall of avarice, hard of heart, a sensual hypocrite, cunning, mercenary, miserable? If it be said that the really religious man is none of these, neither is the truly moral man. Real morality, as well as vital christianity, implies right conduct and consistent principle. But the question simply at issue is, whether the profession or the belief of sound moral opinions implies these; and it certainly does it no more than the profession or belief of orthodox religious opinions does. The conviction of the good or ill consequences of our actions in this life does not absolutely conform the will or the desires to good; neither does the apprehension of future rewards or punishments produce this effect completely or necessarily. The candidate for Heaven is a back-slider; the dread of eternal torments makes but a temporary impression on the mind. This is not a reason, in our judgment, for neglecting or giving up in despair the motives of religion or morality, but for strengthening and cultivating both. With Mr. Irving, it is a triumphant and unanswerable ground for discarding and denouncing morality, and for exalting religion, as the sovereign cure for all wounds, as the *thaumaturgas*, or wonder-worker, in the reform of mankind. We are at a loss to understand how this exclusive and somewhat intolerant view of the subject is reconcileable with sound reason or with history. Religion is no new experiment now first making on mankind; we live in the nineteenth century of the Christian æra; it is not as if we lived in the age of apostles, when we might (from novelty and inexperience of the intended dispensations of Providence) expect the earth to wear a new face, and darkness suddenly to flee away before the light of the gospel: nor do we apprehend that Mr. Irving is one of those who believe with Mr. Croly, that the millennium actually commenced with the battle of

Waterloo ; that event seems as far off, to all outward appearance, as it was two thousand years ago. What does this make against the doctrines of christianity ? Nothing ; if, as far as they are implanted and take root, they bear fruit accordingly, notwithstanding the repugnance and thanklessness of the soil. Why then is Mr. Irving so hard upon the labours of philosophers, moralists, and men of letters, because they do not do all their work at once ? Bishop Butler indeed wrote a most able and learned quarto volume, to prove that the slow growth and imperfect influence of christianity was a proof of its divine origin, and that in this respect we had a right to look for a direct *analogy* between the operations of the world of grace and nature, both proceeding as they did from the same Almighty hands ! Our deservedly popular preacher has, however, an answer to what we have here stated : he says, “ the time must and WILL shortly come ! ” We never contradict prophecies ; we only speak to facts. In addressing himself to this point, Mr. Irving made a spirited digression to the Missionary Societies, and the impending propagation of the Gospel at home and abroad—all obstacles to it would speedily be surmounted :—“ The Negro slave was not so enchained but that the Gospel would set him free ; the Hottentot was not so benighted but that its light would penetrate to him ; the South Sea Islander was not so indolent and voluptuous but that he would rouse himself at its call ; neither the cunning of the Italian, nor the superstition of the Spaniard, nor the tameness of the German, nor the levity of the French, nor the buoyancy of the Irish, nor the indomitable pride of the English, nor the *fiery manhood* of the Scotch, would be long able to withstand its all-pervading influence ! ” We confess, when our Caledonian pastor launched his canoe from the South Sea Isles and landed on European *terra firma*,

taking measure of the vices of each nation that were opposed to the spirit of christianity, we did *prick up* our ears to know what fault he would, in due course of argument, find with his native country—it would go against the grain, no doubt, but still he had undertaken it, and he must speak out—When lo! for some sneaking vice or sordid pettifogging disposition, we have our own “best virtue” palmed upon us as the only failing of the most magnanimous natives of the North—*fiery manhood*, quotha! The cold sweat of rankling malice, hypocrisy, and servility, would be nearer the mark—Eh! Sir Walter? Nay, good Mr. Blackwood, we meant no offence to you! “Fiery manhood” is the Anti-Christian vice or virtue of the Scotch that meets true religion on the borders, and beats her back with suffocating breath! Is Christianity still then to be planted like oak timber in Scotland? What will Dr. Chalmers and the other labourers in the vineyard say to this?—“We pause for a reply!” The best and most impressive part of Mr. Irving’s discourse (Sunday, the 22nd June) was that, in which he gave a very beautiful account of what Christianity had done, or rather might do, in aid of morality and the regeneration of the spirit of man. It had made “corruption blossom,” “annihilated time in the prospect of eternity,” and “changed all nature, from a veil hiding the face of God, into a mirror reflecting his power and beneficence.” We do not, however, see why in the fervour of his enthusiasm he should affirm “that Jesus Christ had destroyed melody,” nor why, by any allowed licence of speech, he should talk of “the mouth of God being muzzled by man.” We might not perhaps have noticed this last expression, considering it as a slip of the tongue; but Mr. Irving preaches from written notes, and his style is, on the whole, polished and ambitious. We can conceive of a deeper strain of argument, of a more

powerful and overwhelming flood of eloquence; but altogether we deem him an able and attractive expounder of Holy Writ; and farther, we believe him to be an honest man. We suspect there is a radical "taint in him," and that Mr. Canning will be advised to withdraw himself from the congregation. His strokes aimed at iniquity in high places are bold, unsparing, and repeated. We would however suggest to him the propriety of containing his indignation at the advancement of the secular priesthood by "the powers that be;" it is a thing of course, and his impatience of their elevation may be invidiously construed into a jealousy of the spoil. When we compare Mr. Irving with some other preachers that we have heard, and particularly with that crawling sycophant Daniel Wilson (who tendered his gratuitous submission to Nero the other day in the excess of his loyalty to George IV.) we are sorry that we have not been able to make our tribute of approbation unqualified as it is cordial, and to stifle *their* venal breath with the applauses bestowed upon *him*. "Oh! for an *eulogy* to kill" all such with!

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*[The following has also lost its way to us. We take it in as a foundling, but without adopting all its sentiments.]*

MR. IRVING, THE QUACK-PREACHER,

We have always set our faces against cant, quackery, and imposture, in every shape; but we think, of all places, the pulpit should be sacred from these. It ought to be the chosen retreat of simplicity, gravity, and decorum. What then must be the feelings of every well-wisher to religion and good order, who witnesses the disgraceful scenes that



are weekly acting at the Caledonian Chapel—the place itself resembling a booth at a fair, and the pulpit made into a stage for a tall, raw-boned, hard-featured, impudent Scotch quack to play off his ambiguous person and obscene antics upon? It is difficult to analyze Mr. Irving's figure. His hair is black and matted like a mane, his beard blue and *stirged*; and he verges in his general appearance to the *simious* tribe, but of the largest species. To hear this person, so qualified, bandy Scotch dialectics, and “sweet religion make a rhapsody of words,” the great, the learned, and the fair, leering dowagers, and faded (or fading) blue stockings, throng twice every Lord's Day—for what?—to admire indecency, blasphemy, and sedition, twanged through the nose, and to be told that he (Mr. Irving) has come up from the banks of the Esk with huge, hasty strides to *introduce God Almighty in London*, and to prop the falling throne of Heaven with his raised right arm! This is too much, though Mr. Irving is six feet three inches high, and a Scotchman. One would think that the Christian and Protestant religion was of too old a standing to be put into leading-strings now, and that the fashionable and the fair will hardly consent to be baptised by this new St. John in the kennels of Saffron-hill and “the mud of Fleet-ditch. Yet, when one looks at the half-saint, half-savage, it *does* seem as if society was to begin again; and all our pre-established notions were confounded by the cross-fire of his double vision. A portentous cast in the right eye is one of the engines with which the orator supports his quackery—it is not a mote, but a beam—which he levels like a battering-ram at my Lord Liverpool (*proh pudor!*) accompanied with a taunt on his Majesty's Ministers and Government—which glances off from the gentle skull of Hone the parrot to Canning's polished forehead, and falls plump on the

shaven crown of Mr. B—— M——, who sits on the steps of the pulpit, with a forlorn attitude and expression, like one of Cibber's celebrated figures. What did Mr. Irving mean, last Sunday, by issuing a Proclamation in the name of the King of Heaven, appointing himself Crier of the Court, beginning with a *to wit*, *to wit*, and ending with damnation to all those who do not go to hear him? He ought to have been hissed like a bad player who leaves his part to foist in fustian of his own. It would not have been borne but in the Scotch accent; and the outrage was carried off by the oddity of the thing. What did he mean by saying, the Sunday before last, that the God of natural religion was like the Great Desert—dry, disagreeable, comfortless, deadly—where no one wished to dwell? No one, we will be bold to say, would venture upon this gross insult to the God of Nature (whom we apprehend to be also the God of Christians) without that strong obliquity of mental vision that can keep natural religion in one eye and revealed religion in the other, look grave on the parent and fulsome on the daughter. Why does Mr. Irving cut and carve and make minced-meat of the attributes of the Almighty, to shock the pious and make the ignorant stare? Why did he, on last Lord's day assert, by an impudent figure, that the God of Mercy was like Alsatia, where the scum of mankind took refuge? Does not this brawny bravo of the Caledonian Kirk want an asylum for himself? Would it not be thought indecent and profane in us to retort such a metaphor, and ask this insane reviler whether, on his theory, the God of Justice is not the God of Newgate, and he himself a volunteer Jack Ketch? We say the indecency, the profaneness would not be in us, but in the original allusion. Mr. Irving will find before long that he cannot play with religion as with cups and balls; that he cannot insult the feelings, the prejudices,

and common sense of mankind with impunity ; and that, instead of taking implicit faith and established opinions in pieces, he had better let them remain in their original integrity. With respect to that last figure of his about Alsatia, we beg to say, that the founder of the Christian religion has left a parable behind him about the Prodigal Son, but perhaps this authority may not weigh with the *modern* Saviour of the polite world ! In a word, this favourite of the frail votaries of religious theatricals should beware, with his tricks, his finery, and his goodly proportions, of the fate of Apuleius's Golden Ass. Still he might do in America.

## THE FIRST CANTO OF THE SQUIRE'S TALE OF CHAUCEER, MODERNIZED.

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Of Cambus, the great Tartar King,  
And his fair flower blossoming;  
And what came riding in the hall,  
When he held his festival.

At Sarra, in the land of Tartary,  
There dwelt a king, the best beneath the sky:  
In prime of life he was a valiant man,  
And Cambus was he called, the noble Khan.  
No where, in all that region, had a crown  
Been ever worn with such entire renown.  
Hardy he was and wise, true to his word,  
He kept his oath as stoutly as his sword.  
His presence marked so well the soul within,  
Men trembled when they heard his pomp begin;  
And yet his ways were gentle and benign;  
But there seemed something in his star, divine;  
For not more fresh was he for arms anew,  
Than sure to beat where'er his trumpets blew;  
And therewithal he ever kept a state  
So fit to uphold a throne so fortunate,  
That there was no where such another man.

This noble king, this Tartar, Cambus Khan,\*  
 Had by the late Queen Elseta, his wife,  
 Two sons, named Cambalu and Algarsife,  
 And a dear daughter, Canace by name,  
 Whose perfect beauty puts my pen to shame.  
 If you could see my heart, it were a glass  
 To show perhaps how fair a thing she was;  
 But when I speak of her, my tongue appears  
 To fail me, looking in that face of hers.  
 'Tis well for me that I regard not those,  
 Who love what I do, as my natural foes;  
 Or when I think how dear she is to be  
 To one that will adorn this history,  
 And how her heart will love him in return,  
 My paper, sooner than be touched, should burn:  
 But she knows nothing of all this at present,  
 She's only young, and innocent, and pleasant;  
 And sometimes by her father sits and sighs,  
 On which he stoops to kiss her gentle-lidded eyes.

And so beful, that when this Khan supreme  
 Had twenty winters borne his diadem,  
 He had the feast of his nativity  
 Cried throughout Sarra, as it was wont to be.  
 It was in March; and the young lusty year  
 Came in with such a flood of golden cheer,  
 That the quick birds, against the sunny sheen,  
 What for the season and the thickening green,

\* This commencement of a fresh paragraph with the second line of a couplet (together with the couplet itself) is retained from the original. It has a fine air of resumption with it, at least to my ear; and is the only good thing which the French have had taste enough to retain from their old poetry.

Sung their affections loudly o'er the fields :  
 They seemed to feel that they had got them shields  
 Against the sword of winter, keen and cold.

High is the feast in Sarra, that they hold ;  
 And Cambus, with his royal vestments on,  
 Sits at a separate table on a throne ;  
 His sons a little lower on the right ;  
 His daughter on the left, a gentle sight ;  
 And then his peers apart from either wall,  
 Ranged in majestic drapery down the hall.  
 The galleries on two sides have crowded slants  
 Of ladies leaning over and gallants ;  
 And o'er the doorway, opposite the king,  
 The proud musicians blow their shawms and sing.  
 But to relate the whole of their array  
 Would keep me from my tale a summer's day ;  
 And so I pass the service and the cost,  
 The often-silenced noise, the lofty toast,  
 And the glad symphonies, that leaped to thank  
 The lustre-giving Lord, whenc'er he drank.  
 Suffice to say that, after the third course,  
 His vassals, while the sprightly wine's in force,  
 And the warm music mingles over all,  
 Bring forth their gifts and set them in the hall ;  
 And so befel, that when the last was set,  
 And while the king sat thus in his estate,  
 Hearing his minstrels playing from on high  
 Before him at his board deliciously,  
 All on a sudden, ere he was aware,  
 Through the hall door and the mute wonder there,  
 There came a stranger on a steed of brass,  
 And in his hand he held a looking-glass ;

Some sparkling ring he wore; and by his side  
 Without a sheath a cutting sword was tied.  
 And up he rides unto the royal board:  
 In all the hall there was not spoke a word:  
 All wait with busy looks, both young and old,  
 To hear what wonderous thing they shall be told.

The stranger, who appeared a noble page,  
 High-bred, and of some twenty years of age,  
 Dismounted from his horse; and kneeling down,  
 Bowed low before the face that wore the crown;  
 Then rose, and revered lady, lords, and all,  
 In order as they sat within the hall,  
 With such observance, both in speech and air,  
 That certainly had Roustan's self been there,  
 Or Hatem Tai with his old courtesy,  
 Returned to earth to shew what men should be,  
 He could not have improved a single thing:  
 Then turning lastly to address the king,  
 Once more, but lightlier than at first, he bowed,  
 And in a manly voice thus spoke aloud:—

“ May the great Cambus to his slave be kind!  
 My lord, the king of Araby and Ind,  
 In honour of your feast; this solemn day,  
 Salutes you in the manner he best may,  
 And sends you, by a page whom he holds dear,  
 (His happy but his humble messenger)  
 This steed of brass; which, in a day and night,  
 Through the dark half as safely as the light,  
 O'er sea and land, and with your perfect ease,  
 Can bear your body wheresoe'er you please.  
 It matters not if it be foul or fair:  
 The thing's like a thought, and cuts the air

So smoothly, and so well observes the track,  
 The man that will may sleep upon his back.  
 All that the rider needs when he would turn,  
 Or rise, or take him downwards, you may learn,  
 If it so please you, when we speak within,  
 And does but take the writhing of a pin.

“ This glass too, which I hold, such is its power,  
 That if by any chance, an evil hour  
 Befel your empire or yourself, 'twould show  
 What men you ought to know of, friend and foe ;  
 And more than this, if any lady's heart  
 Be set on one that plays her an ill part,  
 Or is in aught beneath her love and her,  
 Here she may see his real character,  
 All his new loves, and all his old pursuits :  
 His heart shall all be shown her, to the roots,  
 Therefore, my lord, with your good leave, this glass,  
 And this green ring, the greenest ever was,  
 My master, with his greeting, hopes may be  
 Your excellent daughter's here, my lady Canace.  
 The virtues of the ring, my lord, are these—  
 That if a lady loves the flowers and trees,  
 And birds, and all fair Nature's ministers ;  
 And if she bear this gem within her purse,  
 Or on her hand, like any other ring,  
 There's not a fowl that goes upon the wing,  
 But she shall understand his speech or strain,  
 And in his own tongue answer him again.  
 All plants that gardens or that fields produce ;  
 She shall be also skilled in, and their use,  
 Whether for sweetness or for stanching wound  
 No secret shall she miss, that smiles in balmy grounds.



— “Lastly, my lord, this sword has such a might,  
That let it meet the veriest fiend in fight,  
’Twill carve throughout his armour the first stroke,  
Were it as thick as any branched oak :  
Nor could the wound be better for the care  
Of all the hands and skills that ever were ;  
And yet, should it so please you, of your grace,  
To pass the flat side on the wounded place,  
Though it were ready to let out his soul,  
The flesh should close again, the man be whole.  
Oh heart of hearts ! that nobody shall break !  
Pardon me, Sir, that thus my leave I take  
Even of a sword, and like a lover grieve,  
But its own self, unbidden, will not leave  
The hand that wields it, though it smote a block  
The dullest in the land, or dashed a rock :  
And this my master hopes may also be  
Acceptable to Tartary’s majesty,  
With favour for himself, and pardon, Sir, for me.”

The Khan, who listened with a gracious eye,  
Smiled as he stopp’d, and made a due reply,  
’Thanking the king, his brother, for the great,  
Not gifts, but glories, added to his state,  
And saying how it pleased him to have known  
So young an honour to his neighbour’s throne.  
The youth then gave the proper officers  
The gifts ; who, ’midst the music’s bursting airs,  
Laid them before the king and Canace,  
There as they sate, each in their high degree :  
But nothing that they did could move the horse ;  
Boys might as well have tried their little force  
Upon a giant with his armour on :

The brazen thing stood still as any stone.  
 The stranger hastened to relieve their doubt,  
 And touched his neck, and led him softly out ;  
 And 'twas a wonder and a joy to see  
 How well he went, he stept so tenderly.

Great was the press that from all quarters came  
 To gaze upon this horse of sudden fame ;  
 And many were the struggles to get close,  
 And touch the mane to try if it hung loose,  
 Or pat it on the shining flanks, or feel  
 The muscles in the neck that sternly swell ;  
 But the Khan's officers forbade, and fear  
 E'en of the horse conspired to keep the circle clear.  
 High was the creature built, both broad and long,  
 And with a true proportion to be strong ;  
 And yet so " horsely" and so quick of eye,  
 As if it were a steed of Araby ;  
 So that from tail to ear there was no part  
 Nature herself could better, much less art ;  
 Only the people drended to perceive  
 How cold it was, although it seemed alive ;  
 And on all sides the constant wonder was  
 How it could move, and yet was plainly brass.  
 Of magic some discours'd, and some of powers  
 By planets countenanced in kindly hours,  
 Through which wise men had compassed mighty things  
 Of natural wit to please illustrious kings ;  
 And some fell talking of the iron chain  
 That fell from heaven in old king Argoun's reign.  
 And then they spoke of visions in the air,  
 And how this creature might have been made there,  
 Of white lights heard at work, and fiery lights,

Seen in the north on coldest winter nights,  
 And pale traditions of Pre-Adamites.  
 Much did the talk run also on the sword,  
 That harmed and healed, fit gift for sovereign lord.  
 One said that he had heard or read somewhere,  
 Of a great southern king, with such a spear;  
 A chief, who had for mother a sea-fairy,  
 And slew a terror called the Sagittary.  
 As to the glass, some thought that it might be  
 Made by a certain clear congruity  
 Of angles and reflections, as a pond  
 Shows not its sides alone, but things beyond;  
 Iskander set one, like a sleepless eye,  
 O'er a sea-town, its twin security,  
 In which the merchant read of storms to come,  
 Or saw his sunny ships blown softly home.  
 But most the ring was talked of: every one  
 Quoting that other ring of Solomon,  
 Which, wheresoe'er it married, brought a dower  
 Of wisdom, and upon the hand put power.  
 A knowledge of the speech of birds was known  
 To be a gift especially its own,  
 Which made them certain that this ring of green  
 Was part of it, perhaps a sort of skin  
 Shed for some reason as a serpent's is;  
 And here their reasoning was not much amiss.  
 The wiser sort pondered and doubted; folly  
 Determined every thing, or swallowed wholly;  
 The close and cunning, foolishhest of all,  
 Feared that the whole was diabolical,  
 And wished the stranger might not prove a knave  
 Come to find out what liberal monarchs gave,  
 And ruin with his very dangerous horses

People's eternal safety, and their purses.  
 For what surpasses vice to comprehend,  
 It gladly construes to the baser end.  
 Some wits there were began at last to doubt  
 Whether the horse could really move about,  
 And on their fingers' ends were arguing,  
 When lo! their subject vanished from the ring;  
 Vanished like lightning; an impatient beast!  
 But, hark! I hear them rising from the feast.

The dinner done, Cambus arose; and all  
 Stood up, prepared to follow from the hall:  
 On either side they bend beneath his eye:  
 "Before him goeth the loud minstrelsy;"  
 And thus they pace into a noble room,  
 Where dance and song were waiting till they come  
 With throng of waxen lights that shed a thin perfume.  
 But first the king and his young visitor  
 Go where the horse was put, and close the door;  
 And there the Khan learns all about the pin,  
 And how the horse is hastened or held in,  
 And turned, and made to rise or to descend,  
 And all by a mere thumb and finger's end.  
 The stranger further tells him of a word,  
 By which the horse, the instant it is heard,  
 Vanishes with his sparkling shape, like light,  
 And comes again, whether it be day or night.  
 "And, Sir," said he, "my master bade me say  
 The first time I was honoured in this way,  
 (For on the throne you might prefer, he said,  
 To wave such speeches from a crowned head)  
 That one like you were fitter far than he  
 To ride the elements like a deity,

And with a speed proportioned to your will,  
Shine on the good, and fall upon the ill ;  
For he, too sensual and too satisfied  
With what small good lay near him, like a bride,  
Was ever but a common king ; but you  
A king, and a reforming conqueror too." \*

Glad is great Cambus, both at this discourse,  
And to be master of so strange a horse,  
And longs to mount at once, and go and see  
His highest mountain tops in Tartary,  
Or look upon the Caspian, or appear  
Suddenly in Cathay, a sparkling fear.  
And any other time he would have gone,  
So much he longed to put his pinions on,  
But on his birth-day 'twas not to be done ;  
And so they have returned and joined the guests  
Who wait the finish of this feast of feasts.

But how shall I describe the high delight,  
And all the joys that danced into the night ?  
Imagine all that should conclude a feast  
Given by a mighty prince, and in the 'east,  
And all was here, from song to supper stand,  
As though it had arisen from fairy-land.  
The feast before it was a thing of state ;  
But this the flowery top, and finish delicate.  
Here were the cushioned sophas, the perfumes,  
The heavenly mirrors making endless rooms ;

\* In making these additions to the original, the author had an eye to a continuation of the story, which he would willingly conclude, if he had health and leisure.

The last quintessences of drinks, the trays  
Of coloured relishes dressed a thousand ways ;  
The dancing girls, that bending here and there,  
With asking beauty lay along the air ;  
And lighter instruments, guitars and lutes,  
Sprinkling their silver graces on the flutes ;  
And all the sounds, and all the sweets of show,  
Feeling victorious while the harpings go.  
Not all the lords were there, only the best  
And greatest, all in change of garments drest ;  
And with them were the wives they thought the loveliest,  
You must not judge, my Tartars, by the tales  
Of nations mercy eastern and serails :  
The eastern manners were in duo degrec,  
But mixed and raised with northern liberty ;  
And women came with their impetuous lords,  
To pitch the talk and humanize the boards,  
And shed a gentle pleasure in the place,—  
The smooth alternate with the bearded face,  
As summer airs divide the blustering trees,  
And sway them into smiles and whispering gentleness.

Our young Ambassador conversed with all,  
But still attendant on the sovereign's call,  
Who, like the rest, whatever the discourse,  
Was sure to turn it to the gifts and horse ;  
Till to the terror of some lovers, word  
Was given to fetch the mirror and the sword ;  
The ring meanwhile being handed round, and tried  
Upon fair fingers with a fluttering pride.  
Some longed to have the birds awake, and some  
Were glad enough the tattling things were dumb.

Good God! thought one, and seemed to faint away,  
"What (ah! my Togral!) would the parrot say?"  
"And what," conceived another, "would the jay?"  
"I've often thought the wretch was going to speak,  
"He trolls the shocking words so in his beak:  
"I'm sure the very first would make me shriek."  
Cambus, as sage as he was valiant, thought  
There was no need to have the creatures brought;  
Nor, when the mirror came, would he permit  
That any but himself should read in it;  
For which, as he perceived, but mentioned not,  
Full thirty ladies loved him on the spot.  
As to the sword, he thought it best to try  
So masculine a thing in open sky;  
Which made him also chuse to take a course  
Over the towers of Sarra on his horse.  
So issuing forth, he led into the air,  
Saluting the sweet moon which met them there,  
And forth the steed was brought; you would have said,  
It knew for what, so easily 'twas led,  
And leant with such an air its lively head.  
But when at rest, still as before it stood,  
As though its legs had to the ground been glued.  
Some urged it on, some dragged, and some would fain  
Have made it lift a foot, but all in vain.  
And yet when Cambus whispered it, a thrill  
Flashed through its limbs, nor could its feet be still,  
But rocked the body with a sprightly grace,  
As though it yearned aloft, and weighed it for the race.

The youth had talked of armour like an oak,  
And how the sword would joint it with a stroke.  
The Khan had no convenient foe at hand,

To see what sort of carving he would stand :  
 But in the moon there stood some oaken trees,  
 And suddenly, he struck at one of these :  
 Back, like a giant, fell its towering size,  
 And let the light on his victorious eyes.  
 'The blow was clearly the sword's own, and yet  
 The Khan, as if inspired, felt proud of it,  
 And leaping on the horse as suddenly,  
 He touched the pin, and bade the fair good bye,  
 And, 'midst their pretty shrieks, went mounting to the sky.

Cambus ascended such a height so soon,  
 It seemed as if he meant to reach the moon ;  
 And you might know by a tremendous shout,  
 That not a soul in Sarra but looked out ;  
 But the fierce noise made some of them afraid,  
 That it might startle even a brazen head,  
 And threatening looks were turned upon the youth,  
 Who glowed and said, " By all the faith and truth  
 That is, or can be in the heart of man,  
 Nothing can happen to the noble Khan :  
 See, he returns !" And at the word, indeed,  
 They saw returning the descending steed ;  
 Not round and round, carcering ; but at once,  
 Oblique and to the point, a fervid pounce.  
 For to say truth, the noble Khan himself,  
 Though he had fought on many a mountain shelf,  
 And drooped through deserts, and been drenched in seas,  
 Felt somewhat strange in that great emptiness,  
 And was not sorry to relieve his court,  
 By cutting his return some fathom short :  
 Such awful looks has utter novelty  
 To dash and to confuse the boldest eye.



The Khan returned, they all go back again  
 To their warm room, but do not long remain;  
 For late, and long, and highly-wrought delight  
 Cannot, at will, resume its giddy height;  
 And so his story told, and flatteries paid,  
 He kindly waved his gaping court to bed;  
 For that they did gape, ladies e'en and lords,  
 Our bard, a courtier, specially records;  
 By which we must suppose that courtiers then,  
 In some respect, resembled natural men.  
 Yet still in bed, and dozing oft between,  
 Their fading words recalled what they had seen:  
 Still of the ring they mumbled, and the glass,  
 And what amazing things might come to pass:  
 And when they slept, a thousand souls that night,  
 Were riding on the horse with all their might;  
 They skim, they dive, they shoot about, they soar,  
 And wonder that they never rode before.

Aye: such, quoth the wise wit, is human life:  
 We dream of joy, and wake, and find one's wife:  
 Nay: quoth the wiser wit, the best way then  
 Is to wake little, and go sleep again.  
 Wake much, if life go right: if it go wrong,  
 Learn how to dream with Chaucer all day long:  
 Or learn still better, if you can, to make  
 Your world at all times, sleeping or awake;  
 The true receipt, whether by days or nights,  
 To charm your griefs, and double your delights.  
 Fancy and fact differ in this alone;  
 One strikes us like a thought, one like a stone;  
 But both alike can bring into our eyes  
 The tears, and make a thousand feelings rise

Of smarting wrongs, or pleasant sympathies.  
E'en Fact, the little, worldly gentleman,  
Must get from poor starv'd Fancy all he can ;  
Talks, dresses, dines, has notions, makes a stir,  
Endures himself, nay loves himself, through her  
And cannot clothe even his ungrateful scorn,  
But in the web she weaves from night till morn

See—like the others, whom I've sent to bed,  
The horse itself is put out of my head :  
Ring, sword, and mirror, all of them depart,  
While the dear kind one clasps me to her heart  
And I intend to have a dream divine,  
With arm across her, and her hand in mine.  
Like all, however, when we've rested well,  
We'll meet again ; and talk of what befel  
The lady of the ring within a warbling dell.



## LETTER-WRITING.

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"THE polite Letter-writer," and "Every man his own Correspondent," I have never read. They are doubtless two bewitching books, able to transform any stick of a gentleman into at least a three-penny post. I am the more particular in disclaiming all knowledge of these Letterary authors, as I would not my reading public should imagine me guilty of plagiarism. Believe me, I am quite virtuous.

Something I have to say touching most sorts of letters—not all. For instance, I have nothing to say of Lawyers' letters, those peremptory "how don't you do's," Charons of Fleet-ditch, purveyors of bread and water, whose words run through the heart cork-screw-wise, outraging a tit-bit at the table, and mixing aloes in our wine:—they cannot reach me,—I am off, away from the land of credit—no dun can knock at my door,—we deal for ready money only. For the same reason I am silent about Tailors' cross-legged scrawls, coming like a needle at the wind-up of one's Christmas merriment, telling us, modest hurrying rogues, they have "a small bill to make up by Saturday next," and "hoping for future favours." I wear my own coat! A man, out of Britain, may live as happy as Job; for recollect Job had no debts. Nor will I speak of the letters of great men deceased, golden authors, or tinselled authorities; they speak for themselves. Nor of mercantile letters—yes, they must have their due; for they uphold our commerce,

and commerce upholds our brave old England, and all her old incumbrances—Alas! poor England! By the head of Hermes, though most interesting compositions to pursy exchangers and young ledger-students, they are unworthy of his votaries! His other votaries, thieves and pick-pockets, can surely write better—though not to my knowledge; fortunately for society at large, and perhaps for myself, I have no correspondence with these “gentlemen of the shade, minions of the moon.” But look at their every day, or rather their every night language; is it not fauciful? While they decorate their theft of linen from a hedge with the cant expression of “nimming the suow,” with many other similar snatches at poetry, I cannot forbear, in an imaginative point of view, placing them far above Mercury’s bustling servants. To make short work, I divide merchants into two classes—the laconic and the flummery. Here is a specimen of the first:—

“Gentlemen, Your’s Oth received. Contents noted. Arrived, Jenny, Saunders. She cleared the Custom-house yesterday. Her hams not yet landed. Hope they are in good condition. Enclosed last price-current. Since which a spirit in the rum market. Wines, best, run off quickly. Lead heavy. Copper, very dull. Tin plates look lively. Much done in tallow. Wax sticks on hand. Feathers, goose, are down. Skins do not get off. Great demand for hemp by the Government. Coffee, very good, this morning, with sundry parcels of sugar, eagerly sought after. Our Exchange, one half, has fallen. Money scarce, and therefore great difficulty with bills. Bristles rising. We are, Gentlemen, &c.”

The other style is “tedious as a King,” and I cannot “find in my heart to bestow it all on your Worships.” It generally contains advice of a bill being drawn, and rings

a bob-major, as thus :—" Honour to acknowledge your esteemed favour—have the honour to transmit—valued on your respected house in favour of our esteemed and valuable friend—not doubting but your respected house will favour us by duly honouring—and, with the most perfect esteem and respect, we have the honour to be, &c."

What a relief to turn from such perpetrations ! Come, let us talk of servant-maids. Their letters are always worth something, to themselves or others, as they have neither time nor postage to throw away. They write only when a passion becomes too restless to stay within doors. I take great interest in their unskilful attempts to throw a veil over their impatience. Bad grammar, and worse spelling, a clumsy folding up, eccentric splashings of thimble sealing, and an upside down direction, are, to many persons, their chief recommendations ; though, to my mind, these are no more than the scenery and dresses to a good comedy. "They hold, as it were, a mirror up to nature,"—a crooked one, I grant. Here I see many follies, mixed with their share of goodness, and sometimes without, making odd faces as they peep through our language in rags. The purchase of a new bonnet, with Mrs. Mansby's assurance "it is the prettiest thing she ever made, and, besides that, she has not a bit more of the stuff," is followed by challenging, per post, her former fellow servant to make holiday some day next week ; and thus, at a trifling expense, vent is given to the exuberance of that vanity, without a becoming share of which neither a scullion nor a princess would look half so charming. In an affair of jealousy, when she writes to the crony friend of a rival, that she intends for evermore to have done with Mr. Jemmy, because she knows he keeps low and disagreeable acquaintances,—how innocent is her revenge compared to the cruel and ignorant Roxana's !

When I read Molly's wrathful story of some vail or perquisite being unjustly withheld from her share of the kitchen spoils, and observe her anger exhausting itself as her fingers become weary of the pen, I cannot but lament that Thetis did not teach her son to read and write, and thus have saved a whole Iliad of fury and slaughter, though it were pity to lose the poem. What a blessed invention is the post, whether two-penny, general, or foreign! It carries off, by a thousand invisible channels, like the system of underground draining, half the disorders of the human heart. Let every one write down his worst, instead of putting it into practice. A spiteful scrawl cannot well do much harm in the world; while, on the other hand, a sheet of paper full of kindness does infinite good to all parties. One of this last description lately fell into my hands, from a cook at Canterbury to her old uncle. She enclosed, kind soul! a two pound note, saved from her quarter's wages; said a thousand affectionate things, and, after wishing him many happy days, she—what think you?—she quoted Shakespear!—"May goodness and you feel up one monument." Thomson's Seasons lying in the window-seat of a cottage has been pronounced sufficient evidence of the poet's fame; but what is that compared to being quoted by a Canterbury cook? There is another species of kind-hearted writing, where servant-maids almost equal their too susceptible mistresses; but this falls into the next division of my subject, and indeed I am ashamed of having neglected it so long.

Love-letters—here's a theme! In the first place, let every one beware of counterfeits, for such are abroad. Few genuine ones are to be had for love, and none for money. Finely wrought compliments, an epigrammatic style, or any thing that looks like great care and study, is a sure proof of

heresy—that rogue is thinking of the girl's money. Raptures and complaints, sprinkled with something stolen from Ovid or Moore, and crow-quilled on the best gilt-edge, are enough to startle the virtue of any considerate young lady. Folks cannot be too cautious. There is another sort of love writing, much in vogue in this our philosophic age, down-right profanation, taking upon itself to prove that Cupid has found out a new cut to the heart; namely, by sending his arrows first through the brain—it makes me wince to think of it. Such letters are treatises on prater-natural history. These sedate persons, who generally wear flannel night-caps because the head should be kept warm, and Angola socks for winter wear because the damp is so bad for the feet—these mock-heroic gentry, I say, absolutely assert there can be no true love except what is founded on the qualities of the mind. At first, as they argue, it must be no more than simple esteem, till ripened into a softer feeling, by a similarity of taste, and a congeniality of sentiment in matters of religion and morality, it haply attains to something of the value of—a plain gold ring and the parson's blessing. A very comfortable doctrine for those with whom it is impossible to fall in love. Just as if Romeo and Juliet ever thought of more than one sentiment in each other's breast; and their love was truer than metaphysics. I must quit such a subject; flesh and blood can't bear it. Now for a hint at what is more to the purpose. It is no such difficult matter to distinguish between truth and hypocrisy in these affairs, as some old people imagine. For the benefit of the rising generation, here are a few infallible signs of an unfeigned passion. Let them always bear in mind that obscurity is the grand point. There ought to be so restless a confusion in the lover, that far from its being necessary his mistress should find his letter intelligible, he.



should be, after an hour's respite, incapable of explaining his own meaning; it is quite sufficient if he thought he understood himself at the time. If thou art guilty of a pretence to the drowsiness of reason, "there is no more faith in thee than in a stewed prune." This is a general rule, and as the style is inimitable, there can be no fear of deception. Any attempt, though a flurried one, at sense or connection of sentences, is fatal. Again, a constant interchange of the sublime and the bathos is indispensable; together with certain usual epithets of endearment, in endless repetition; and, here and there, a lively idea of dying. To uninterested persons such effusions may appear insipid, and probably silly, but their opinion is of no importance. In fact, to the parties themselves, if they ever happen to fall out of love, they will certainly be as little amusing as a physician's prescriptions to his patient just happily recovered from a fever. Let not my readers, fair ones I mean, imagine I entertain any disrespectful notions of love, or that my temper is soured by a parcel of billets-doux returned on my hands. All my intention is to show that the young blooming God ought not to expose himself in black and white.

Hate-letters ought not to come next; yet, for the sake of variety, they are welcome. These, whether expressed in reproaches or threats, contempt or indignation, are wonderfully energetic. Of all passions, anger is the most eloquent. It is easier to say a cruel thing than a kind one. Milton's devils talk better than his angels. It is more difficult for love to express itself in words, because it has so much to say; while hatred can utter its heart-full in a breath, and afterwards expatiate on the strength of its own inspiration. An angry man, and a good one at the same time, always writes more bitterly than he would have spoken; this, at first sight, seems unaccountable, as the comparatively slow

motions of the pen must give him the more time for reflection; but I am convinced the cause of this excess arises from having a blank piece of paper before him instead of a human countenance, which latter must be very bad indeed not to awaken some remorse. The greatest provocation to write a hate-letter is in answer to a treacherous friend, who still addresses you throughout in the kindest manner, with a "My dear Sir" at the beginning, and ends with a "Yours, most sincerely." In this case, it may be excusable to dip your pen in gall; but will that do any good? On the contrary, it is more noble, more manly, to pay respect even to the ashes of friendship.

Now are a swarm of notes, like gnats, buzzing about me, all claiming attention to their several merits. One, without a seal, yet pretending to the title of "a letter," boasts of introducing strange gentlemen to one another. A second makes wary inquiries about the "cleanliness, sobriety, and honesty," of a housemaid, footman, or cook. Then a crowd of borrowers perplex me, by requesting the loan of a fish-kettle, or the last Canto of Don Juan, or a trifle to be repaid in a fortnight. And lastly, a very agreeable one offers to bribe me with an invitation to dinner.—I cannot possibly accept it.

At length I arrive at what my fingers have been aching to come at,—letters from a friend; or, if the world will allow it, from many friends. In my opinion, friendship can best express itself by the pen; from which alone the closest friendships have sometimes originated. "The pleasure of society among friends," La Bruyere tells us, "is cultivated by a resemblance of opinion on points of morality, and by some difference of taste in the sciences." Yet this pleasure may exist in parties who can separate for ever without much regret. While that honest, glowing sentiment, of all others

the least selfish, never so thrills in our hearts as when our friend writes to us ; and it must be often, and in all his moods, in his hopes and fears, in his joys and sorrows. Not the careless correspondence between two worthy gentlemen in adjoining counties, when a day's ride, or haply a walk, can bring them face to face. No ; the letter must have been long on the road, must be stamped with a foreign post-mark, to make it precious ; or with an English stamp, to him who is called the " foreigner," wherever he travels away from his endeared associates. It is enough to make sweet the pain of actual banishment. Let those who live out of their own country describe, if they can, the emotion they feel as they burst the seal of such a letter.

It is a frequent complaint with those at home that the one abroad does not write so often as he ought. I suspect there is little justice in it. The one abroad will hardly fail, until wearied out by neglect. He will be wise enough to bait his hook. The fact is—and why conceal it?—there is manual labour, time occupied, and no small resolution requisite, to fill a sheet of paper in a minute character, which, every one knows, is expected between friends ; and these are the sole reasons of their deferring it from day to day, with an evil worrying conscience, till at last they are often ashamed of writing. I never have put forth in the phrase of " the pleasure of writing to you ;" as I invariably find it used by the worst correspondents ; it is a lying bit of civility. Nothing indeed can be more delightful than to stroll about the fields, filling up an imaginary letter ; but when we sit at our desks to turn it into a reality, it becomes downright work, and is cheerfully performed solely because it is the means of getting another in return. Besides, an absentee, if he happens to be remiss, should be treated with charity. He requires evidently more attention than those

left behind. They have their ordinary occupations and associations; they miss but a single link in the chain; a traveller has torn himself from all. Again, this feeling must not be omitted in the balance; he who is at a distance has better grounds for the suspicion of being forgotten, while his friends have an assurance that he cannot possibly forget his home.

Some there are whose labours might be spared. I have long ceased to encourage them. They fill the first page with apologies for not having answered me earlier—this is worse than their silence. The next thing is, to echo every circumstance I have related for their amusement; and their sentences, one after the other, set out with—"Your account of"—"How delighted you must have been when"—"I envy the journey you had from"—"As you observe, the climate must be"—and so on to the end of the chapter; and this they call answering me. Then follow loving remembrances from all the family, severally and collectively. And they finish with another apology, far more reasonable than the first, for having "troubled me with so much nonsense." There are others who fly off into the opposite extreme. To execute something worthy of being sent across the channel, and of the postage, is to them a serious matter; quite an undertaking. They tease their brains for a fit subject, ponder on the best things that may be said upon it, and send you, not a letter, but an intolerable essay. A few general rules may be of use. The principal one is, as in conversation, to keep in mind the taste and character of the person to whom you are writing. It is always folly to assert you have "really nothing to say," unless it is your belief you would remain dumb in his company. Never touch on politics to one who cares not for a newspaper; indeed it is well to omit them on every occasion, as they read better in

print. With a matter-of-fact man, you must imagine yourself in a witness-box; no exaggeration, nothing figurative—I would not trust a metaphor; he may be confused, or misled, or, what is worse, suspect you intend to impose upon him. You have no small advantage in addressing a literary man; with him every thing is interesting that is worth telling; however, news of new books, or of a very old one, ought to occupy a considerable space. To a lady, young or old, a story is acceptable; and let it be spiced with love. By the bye, I have to beg pardon of the ladies for not having yet said a word about them. Perhaps, as they have so constantly been praised for their skill in letter-writing, it appeared to me a work of supererogation. I assure them, that, were the world entirely composed of ladies, a gentleman, and then he must be the man in the moon, would know better than to drop any instructions on this point. It is said the reason of their excelling is, that they write as they talk. I insist upon it their writing is superior; at least that their pens run on like their tongues in their pleasantest and happiest moods. Then, a great recommendation to a traveller, they have the art of bringing to one's mind, home, more than can any master of a house; every word breathes of their own atmosphere, till it is difficult to believe you can be at so great a distance—surely I am only next door! After what I have thus said publicly, I trust I shall be rewarded—secretly, if they prefer it; and no doubt this will increase the number of my fair-handed correspondents. Men's letters are, for the most part, of too stubborn a nature. They will not bend to petty circumstances; or, if they do, it is but a kind of Dutch painting. They either omit them altogether, or paint them with an awkward minuteness, leaving nothing to the imagination. “In your next describe your present sitting-room”—were

the few words which made me feel the force of the writer's friendship, and the interest he took in all that concerned me, far more than a very long sentence which preceded it, where he expressed his regret at our being separated. Of all letters the most magical in their effect are those written in a state of pure enjoyment, full of high animal spirits. Sorrows will have their way, and it is fit they should; but if we are happy, why not make it appear? The gravest philosopher can, if he chooses, clap on his wig with the hind part before; and his profoundest thoughts will lose nothing in being uttered with a laugh. So great an epicure in this science as I am could give as many receipts as that kitchen-favourite, Dr. Kitchener. But at this moment I am all impatience. The post arrived an hour ago, and the treasures of the leathern bag must by this time be sorted.



## ARGUING IN A CIRCLE.

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THERE was an account in the newspapers the other day of a fracas in the street, in which a Lord and one or two Members of Parliament were concerned. It availed them nought to plead the privilege of Peerage, or to have made speeches in the House—they were held to bail, like the vilest of the rabble, and the circumstance was not considered a very creditable one to come before the public. Ah! it is that public that is the sad thing. It is the most tremendous ring that ever was formed to see fair play between man and man; it puts people on their good behaviour immediately; and wherever it exists, there is an end of the airs and graces which individuals, high in rank, and low in understanding and morals, may chuse to give themselves. While the affair is private and can be kept in a corner, personal fear and favour are the ruling principles, *might* prevails over *right*: but bring it before the world, and truth and justice stand some chance. The public is too large a body to be bribed or browbeat. Its voice, deep and loud, quails the hearts of princes: its breath would make the feather in a lord's cap bend and cower before it, if its glance, measuring the real magnitude of such persons with their lofty, tiptoe, flaunting pretensions, had not long since taken the feathers out of their caps. A lord is now dressed (oh! degenerate world) like any other man; and a watchman will no sooner let go his grasp of his plain collar than he will that of a



Commoner or ~~any~~ other man, who has his "fancies and good-nights." What a falling off is here from the time when if a "base cullionly fellow" had dared to lay hands on a nobleman, on "one of quality," he would have whipped his sword out of its scabbard and run him through the body; the "beggary, unmannered corse" would have been thrown into the Thames or the next ditch; and woe to any person that should have attempted to make a stir in the matter! "The age of chivalry is gone, that of constables, legislators, and Grub-street writers, has succeeded, and the glory of heraldry is extinguished for ever."

"The melancholy Jacques grieves at that."

Poor Sir Walter! the times are changed indeed, since a Duke of Buckingham could send a couple of bullies, equipped in his livery, with swords and ribbons, to carry off a young lady from a Peveril of the Peak, by main force, in the face of day, and yet the bye-standers not dare to interfere, from a dread of the Duke's livery and the High Court of Star Chamber! It is no wonder that the present Duke of Buckingham (the old title new revived) makes speeches in the Upper House to prove that legitimate monarchs have a right, whenever they please, to run their swords through the heart of a nation and *pink* the liberties of mankind, thinking if this doctrine were once fully restored, the old times of his predecessor might come again,—

"New manners and the pomp of elder days!"

It is in tracing the history of private manners that we see (more than by any thing else) the progress that has been made in public opinion and political liberty, and that may be still farther made. No one individual now sets up his will as higher than the law: no noble Duke or Baron bold

acts the professed bully or glories in the character of a lawless ruffian, as a part of the etiquette and privileges of high rank: no gay, gaudy minion of the court takes the wall of the passengers, sword in hand, cuts a throat, washes his white, crimson-spotted hands, and then to dinner with the king and the ladies.—*That is over with us at present; and while that is the case, Hampden will not have bled in the field, nor Sydney on the scaffold, in vain! Even the monarch in this country, though he is above the law, is subject to opinion; "submits," as Mr. Burke has it, both from choice and necessity, "to the soft collar of social esteem, and gives a domination, vanquisher of laws, to be subdued by manners!"*

It is this which drives the Despots of the Continent mad, and makes their nobles and chief vassals league together, like a herd of tygers, to destroy the example of liberty which we (the people of England) have set to the rest of the world. They are afraid that if this example should spread and things go on much farther in the road they have taken, they will no longer be able to give their subjects and dependants the *knout*, to send them to the galleys or a dungeon without any warrant but their own unbridled will, and that a lord or a king will be no more above the law than any other man. Mankind, in short, till lately and except in this country, were considered as a herd of deer which the privileged classes were to use for their pleasure, or which they were to hunt down for spite or sport, as liked them best. That they should combine together with a knot of obscure philosophers and hair-brained philanthropists, to set up a plea not to be used at any man's pleasure, or hunted down like vermin for any man's sport, was an insult to be avenged with seas of blood, an attack upon the foundations of social order, and the very existence of all law, religion, and morality. In all

the legitimate governments of Europe there existed, and there still exist, a number of individuals who were exempted (by birth and title) from the law, who could offer every affront to religion, and commit every outrage upon morality with impunity, with insolence and loud laughter, and who pretended that in asserting this monstrous privilege of theirs to the very letter, the essence of all law, religion, and morality consisted. This was the case in France till the year 1789. The only law was the will of the rich to insult and harass the poor, the only religion a superstitious mummary, the only morality subserviency to the pleasures of the great. In the mild reign of Louis XV. only, there were fifteen thousand *lettres de cachet* issued for a number of private, nameless offences, such as the withholding a wife or daughter from the embraces of some man of rank, for having formerly received favours from a king's mistress, or writing an epigram on a Minister of State. It was on the ruins of this flagitious system (no less despicable than detestable) that the French Revolution rose; and the towers of the Bastille, as they fell, announced the proud truth in welcome thunder to the human race—to all but those who thought they were born, and who only wished to live, to exercise their sweeping, wholesale, ruthless tyranny, or to vent the workings of their petty, rankling spleen, pride, bigotry, and malice, in endless, tormenting details on their fellow-creatures.

It will, I conceive, hereafter be considered as the greatest enormity in history, the stupidest and the most barefaced insult that ever was practised on the understandings or the rights of men, that we should interfere in this quarrel between liberty and slavery, take the wrong side, and endeavour to suppress the natural consequences of that very example of freedom we had set. That we should do this, we who had "long insulted the slavery of Europe by the

loudness of our boasts of freedom," who had laughed at the *Grand Monarque* for the last hundred and fifty years, and treated his subjects with every indignity, as belonging to an inferior species to ourselves, for submitting to his cruel and enervated sway; that the instant they took us at our word and were willing to break the chains of Popery and Slavery that we never ceased to taunt them with, we should turn against them, stand passive by "with jealous leer malign," witnessing the machinations of despots to extinguish the rising liberties of the world, and with the first plausible pretext, the first watch-word given (the blow aimed at the head of a king confederate with the enemies of his country against its freedom) should join the warwhoop, and continue it loudest and longest, and never rest, under one hollow, dastard, loathsome pretence or other, till we had put down "the last example of democratic rebellion" (we, who are nothing but rebellion all over, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot!) and had restored the doctrine of Divine Right, that had fallen headless from its throne of Ignorance and Superstition with the First Charles, long before it was condemned to the same fate in the person of the French king; that we should do this, and be led, urged on to the unhalloved task by a descendant of the House of Brunswick, who held his crown in contempt of the Stuarts, and grew old, blind, and crazed in the unsated, undiverted, sacred thirst of Legitimacy, is a thing that posterity will wonder at. We pretend to have interfered to put down the horrors of the French Revolution, when it was our interference (with that of others) that produced those horrors, of which we were glad as an excuse to justify our crooked policy and to screen the insidious, deadly, fatal blow aimed at liberty. No; the "cause was hearted" in the breasts of those who reign, or who would reign, in contempt of the people, and with whom

it rests to make peace or war. Is not the same principle at work still? What horrors have the *Holy Alliance* to plead in vindication of their interference with Spain? They have not a rag, a thread of all their hideous tissue of sophistry and lies to cover "the open and apparent shame" of this sequel and consistent comment on their former conduct. It is a naked, barefaced, undisguised attack upon the rights and liberties of the world: it is putting the thing upon its true and proper footing—the claim of Kings to hold mankind as a property in perpetuity. There are no horrors, real or pretended, to warrant this new outrage on common sense and human nature. It stands on its own proud basis of injustice—it towers and mocks the skies in all the majesty of regal wrong. "The shame, the blood be upon their heads." If there are no horrors ready-made to their hands, they stand upon their privilege to commit wanton outrage and unqualified aggression; and if by these means they can provoke horrors, then the last are put first as the most plausible plea, as a handsome mask and soft lining to the hard gripe and features of Legitimacy—Religion consecrates, and Loyalty sanctions the fraud! But, should the scheme fail in spite of every art and effort, and the wrong they have meditated be retorted on their own heads, then we shall have, as before, an appeal made to Liberty and Humanity—the motto of despots will once more be *peace on earth and good-will to men*—and we too shall join in the yell of blood and the whine of humanity. We are only waiting for an excuse now—till the threats and insults and cruelties of insolent invaders call forth reprisals, and lead to some act of popular fury or national justice that shall serve as a signal to rouse the torpid spirit of trade in the city, or to inflame the loyalty of country gentlemen, deaf for the present to all other sounds but that appalling one of BENT! We must remain neuter while a

grievous wrong is acting, unless we can get something by the change, or pick a quarrel with the right. We are peaceable, politic, when a nation's liberty only is at stake, but were it a monarch's crown that hung tottering in the air, oh! how soon would a patriot senate and people start out to avenge the idle cause: a single speech from the throne would metamorphose us into martyrs of self-interest, saviours of the world, deliverers of Europe from lawless violence and unexampled wrong. But here we have no heart to stir, because the name of liberty alone (without the cant of loyalty) has lost its magic charm on the ears of Englishmen—impotent to save, powerful only to betray and destroy themselves and others!

We want a Burke to give the thing a legitimate turn at present. I am afraid the Editor of the *New Times* can hardly supply his place. They could hardly have done before, without that eloquent apostate, that brilliant sophist, to throw his pen into the scale against truth and liberty. He varnished over a bad cause with smooth words, and had power to "make the worse appear the better reason"—the devil's boast! The madness of genius was necessary to second the madness of a court; his flaming imagination was the torch that kindled the smouldering fire in the inmost sanctuary of pride and power, and spread havoc, dismay, and desolation through the world. The light of his imagination, sportive, dazzling, beauteous as it seemed, was followed by the stroke of death. It so happens that I myself have played all my life with his forked shafts unhurt, because I had a metaphysical clue to carry off the noxious particles, and let them sink into the earth, like drops of water. But the English nation are not a nation of metaphysicians, or they would have detected, and smiled, or wept over the glittering fallacies of this half-bred reasoner, but,

at the same time, most accomplished rhetorician that the world ever saw. • But they are perplexed by sophistry, stupefied by prejudice, staggered by authority. In the way of common sense and practical inquiry, they do well enough; but start a paradox, and they know not what to make of it. They either turn from it altogether, or, if interest or fear give them motives to attend to it, are fascinated by it. They cannot analyze or separate the true from the *seeming* good. Mr. Pitt, with his deep-mouthed *common-places*, was able to follow in the same track, and fill up the cry; but he could not have given the tone to political feeling, or led on the chase with "so musical a discord, such sweet thunder." Burke strewed the flowers of his style over the rotten carcase of corruption, and embalmed it in immortal prose: he contrived, by the force of artful invective and misapplied epithets, to persuade the people of England that Liberty was an illiberal, hollow sound; that humanity was a barbarous modern invention, that prejudices were the test of truth, that reason was a strumpet, and right a fiction. Every other view of the subject but his ("so well the tempter glozed") seemed to be without attraction, elegance, or refinement. Politics became poetry in his hands, his sayings passed like proverbs from mouth to mouth, and his descriptions and similes were admired and repeated by the fashionable and the fair. Liberty from thenceforward became a low thing: philosophy was a spring-nailed, velvet-pawed tiger-cat, with green eyes, watching its opportunity to dart upon its prey: humanity was a lurking assassin. The emblems of our cardinal and favourite virtues were overturned: the whole vocabulary of national watch-words was inverted or displaced. This was a change indeed in our style of thinking, more alarming than that in our calendar; and this change was brought about by Mr. Burke,

who softened down hard reasons in the crucible of his fancy, and who gave to his epithets the force of nick-names. Half the business was done by his description of the Queen of France. It was an appeal to all women of quality; to all who were, or would be thought, cavaliers or men of honour; to all who were admirers of beauty, or rank, or sex. Yet what it had to do with the question, it would be difficult to say. If a woman is handsome, it is well: but it is no reason why she should poison her husband, or betray a country. If, instead of being young, beautiful, and free of manners, Marie Antoinette had been old, ugly, and chaste, all this mischief had been prevented. The author of the Reflections had seen or dreamt he saw a most delightful vision sixteen years before, which had thrown his brain into a ferment; and he was determined to throw his readers and the world into one too. It was a theme for a copy of verses, or a romance; not for a work in which the destinies of mankind were to be weighed. Yet she was the Helen that opened another Iliad of woes; and the world was paid for that accursed glance at youthful beauty with rivers of blood. If there was any one of sufficient genius now to deck out some Castilian maid, or village girl, in the Army of the Faith, in all the colours of fancy, to reflect her image in a thousand ages and hearts, making a saint and a martyr of her; turning loyalty into religion and the rights and liberties of the Spanish nation, and of all other nations, into a mockery, a bye-word, and a bugbear, how soon would an end be put to Mr. Canning's present *bizarre* (almost afraid to know itself) situation! How gladly he would turn round on the pivot of his forced neutrality, and put all his drooping tropes and figures on their splendid war-establishment again!



Mr. Burke was much of a theatrical man. I do not mean that his high-wrought enthusiasm or vehemence was not natural to him; but the direction that he gave to it was exceedingly capricious and arbitrary. It was for some time a doubtful question which way he should turn with respect to the French Revolution, whether for or against it. His pride took the alarm, that so much had been done, with which he had nothing to do, and that a great empire had been overturned with his favourite engines, wit and eloquence, while he had been reforming the "turn-spit of the king's kitchen," in set speeches far superior to the occasion. Rousseau and the Encyclopædists had lamentably got the start of him; and he was resolved to drag them back somehow by the heels, and bring what they had effected to an untimely end,—

"Undoing all, as all had never been."

The "Reflections on the French Revolution" was a spiteful and dastard but too successful attempt to *put a spoke in the wheels* of knowledge and progressive civilization, and throw them back for a century and a half at least. In viewing the change in the prospects of society, in producing which he had only a slight and indirect hand by his efforts in the cause of American freedom, he seemed to say, with lago in the play,—

"Though that their joy be joy,  
Yet will I contrive  
To throw such changes of vexations on it,  
As it may lose some colour."

He went beyond his own most sanguine hopes, but did not live to witness their final accomplishment, by seeing France literally "blotted out of the map of Europe." He died in the most brilliant part of Buonaparte's victorious and

captain-like campaigns in Italy. If it could have been foreseen what an "ugly customer" he was likely to prove, the way would have been to have bribed his vanity (a great deal stronger than his interest) over to the other side, by asking his opinion; and, indeed, he has thrown out pretty broad hints in the early stage of his hostility, and before the unexpected success of the French arms, and the whizzing arrows flung at him by his old friends and new antagonists had stung him to madness, that the great error of the National Assembly was in not having consulted able and experienced heads on this side the water, as to demolishing the old, and constructing the new edifice. If he had been employed to lay the first stone, or to assist, by an inaugural dissertation, at the baptism of the new French Constitution, the fabric of the Revolution would thenceforth have risen,—

"Like an exhalation of rich distilled perfumery,"

without let or molestation from his tongue or pen. But he was overlooked. He was not called from his closet, or from his place in the House (where, it must be confessed, he was out of his place) to "ride in the whirlwind and direct the storm;" and therefore he tried, like some malicious hag, to urge the veering gale into a hurricane; to dash the labouring vessel of the state in pieces, and make shipwreck of the eternal jewel of man's happiness, which it had on board—Liberty. The stores of practical and speculative knowledge which he had been for years collecting and digesting, and for which he had no use at home, were not called into play abroad. His genius had hitherto been always too mighty for the occasion, but here his utmost grasp of intellect would hardly have been sufficient to grapple with it. What an opportunity was lost! Something, therefore, was to be done, to relieve the galling sense of disappointed ambition

and mortified self-consequence. Our political *Busy-body* turned *Marplot*; and maliciously, and like a felon, strangled the babe that he was not professionally called in to swaddle, and dandle, and bring to maturity. He had his revenge: but so must others have their's on his memory.

Burke was not an honest man. There was always a *dash* of insincerity, a sinister bias in his disposition. We see, from the Letters that passed between him and his two brothers, and Barry the painter, that there was constantly a balancing of self-interest and principle in his mind; a thanking of God that he was in no danger of yielding to temptation, yet as if it were a doubtful or ticklish point; and a patient, pensive expectation of place and emolument, till he could reconile it with integrity and fidelity to his party; which might easily be construed into a querulous hankering after it, and an opinion that this temporary self-denial implied a considerable sacrifice on his part, or that he displayed no small share of virtue in not immediately turning knave. All this, if narrowly looked into, has a very suspicious appearance. Burke, with all his capricious wildness and flighty impulses, was a self-seeker, and more constant in his enmities than in his friendships. He bore malice, and did not forgive to the last. His cold, sullen behaviour to Fox, who shed tears when they had a quarrel in the House, and his refusal to see him afterwards, when the latter came to visit him on his death-bed, will for ever remain a stigma on his memory. He was, however, punished for his fault. In his latter writings, he complains bitterly of the solitariness of his old age, and of the absence of the friends of his youth—whom he had deserted. This is natural justice, and the tribute due to apostacy. A man may carry over his own conscience to the side of his vanity or interest, but he cannot expect, at the same time, to carry

over along with him all those with whom he has been connected in thought and action, and whose society he will miss, sooner or later. Mr. Burke could hardly hope to find, in his casual, awkward, unaccountable intercourse with such men as Pitt or Dundas, amends for the loss of his old friends, Fox and Sheridan, to whom he was knit not only by political ties, but by old habitudes, lengthened recollections, and a variety of common studies and pursuits. Pitt was a mere politician; Dundas, a mere worldling. What would they care about him, and his "winged words"? *No more of talk* about the meetings at Sir Joshua's—the *Noctes canaque Delum*; about the fine portraits of that great colourist; about Johnson or Goldsmith, or Dunning or Barrè; or their early speeches; or the trying times in the beginning of the American war; or the classic taste and free-born spirit of Greece and Rome;—

"The beautiful was vanish'd, and return'd not."

Perhaps, indeed, he would wish to forget most of these, as ungrateful topics; but when a man seeks for repose in oblivion of himself, he had better seek it, where he will soonest find it,—in the grave! Whatever the talents, or the momentary coincidence of opinion of his new allies, there would be a want of previous sympathy between them. Their notions would not amalgamate, or they would not be sure that they did. Every thing would require to be explained, to be reconciled. There would be none of the freedom of habitual intimacy. Friendship, like the clothes we wear, becomes the easier from custom. New friendships do not sit well on old or middle age. Affection is a science, to which it is too late to serve an apprenticeship after a certain period of life. This is the case with all patched-up, conventional intimacies; but it is worse when they are built on

inveterate hostility and desertion from an opposite party, where their naturally crude taste is embittered by jealousy and rankling wounds. We think to exchange old friends and connections for new ones, and to be received with an additional welcome for the sacrifice we have made ; but we gain nothing by it but the contempt of those whom we have left, and the suspicions of those whom we have joined. By betraying a cause, and turning our backs on a principle, we forfeit the esteem of the honest, and do not inspire one particle of confidence or respect in those who may profit by and pay us for our treachery.

Deserters are never implicitly trusted. There is, besides the sentiment or general principle of the thing, a practical reason for this. Their zeal, their eagerness to distinguish themselves in their new career, makes them rash and extravagant ; and not only so, but there is always a leaven of their old principles remaining behind, which breaks out in spite of themselves, and which it is difficult for their encouragers and patrons to guard against. This was remarkably the case with the late Mr. Windham. He was constantly *running a-muck* at some question or other, and committing the Ministers. His old, free-thinking, Opposition habits returned upon him before he was aware of it ; and he was sure to hazard some paradox, or stickle for some objectionable point, contrary to the forms of office. The cabinet had contemplated no such thing. He was accordingly kept in check, and alarmed the treasury-bench whenever he rose. He was like a dog that gives mouth before the time, or is continually running on a stray scent ; he was chid and fed ! The same thing is observable in the present Poet-Laureat, whose jacobinical principles have taken such deep root in him (*in his case*) that they break out even in his Court poems, like " a thick scurf " on loyalty ; and he presents

them unconsciously, as an offering of "sweet-smelling gums," at the very foot of the throne. He at present retains his place apparently on condition of holding his tongue. He writes such Odes on kings, that it is next to impossible not to travestie them into lampoons!

The remarks I have made above apply strongly to him and some of his associates of the *Lake School*. I fancy he has felt, as much as any one, the inconvenience of drawing off from a cause, and that by so doing we leave our oldest and our best friends behind. There are those among the favourers and admirers of his youth, whom his dim eyes discover not, and who do not count his grey hairs. Not one or two, but more;—men of character and understanding, who had pledged mutual faith, and drank the cup of freedom with him, warm from the wine-press, as well as the "dews of Castilie." He gave up a principle, and one left him;—he insulted a feeling, and another fled;—he accepted a place, and received the congratulations of no one but Mr. Croker. He looks round for them in vain, with throbbing heart, (the heart of a poet can never lie still; he should take the more care what it is that agitates it!)—sees only the shadows or the carcasses of old friendships; or stretches out his hand to grasp some new patron, and finds that also cold. If our friends are sometimes accused of short memories, our enemies make it up by having long ones. We had better adhere to the first; for we must despair of making cordial converts of the last. This double desolation is cheerless, and makes a man bethink himself. We may make a shift (a shabby one) without our self-respect; but it will never do to have it followed by the loss of the respect of those whose opinion we once valued most. We may tamper with our own consciences; but we feel at a loss without the testimony of others in our favour, which is

seldom paid, except to integrity of purpose and principle. Perhaps, however, Mr. Southey consoles himself for a certain void without and within, by receiving the compliments of some Under-graduate of either of our Universities, on his last article in defence of Rotten Boroughs, in the Quarterly Review; or of a Dignitary of the Church, on his share in the Six Acts, and for suggesting to Lord Sidmouth the propriety of punishing the second conviction for libel with banishment. We do not know how this may be: but with us, it would barb the dart.

It would not matter, if these turn-coats were not in such violent extremes. Between the two, they must be strangely perplexed in their own minds, and scarcely know what to make of themselves. They must have singular qualms come over them at times—the apparitions of former acquaintance and opinions. If they were contented to correct, to qualify their youthful extravagancies, and to be taught by experience to steer a middle course, and pay some deference to the conclusions of others, it would be mighty well; but this is not their humour. They must be conspicuous, dogmatical, exclusive, intolerant, on whichever side they are: the mode may be different, the principle is the same. A man's nature does not change, though he may profess different sentiments. A Socinian may become a Calvinist, or a Whig a Tory; but a bigot is always a bigot; an egotist never becomes humble. Besides, what excuse has a man, after thirty, to change about all of a sudden to the very opposite side? If he is an uneducated man, he may indeed plead ignorance yesterday of what he has learnt to-day: but a man of study and reading can't pretend that a whole host of arguments has suddenly burst upon him, of which he never heard before, and that they have upset all his earlier notions: he must have known them long before, and

if they made no impression on him, then to modify his violent zeal (supposing them to be right now) it is a sign either of a disinclination, or of an incapacity, on his part, to give truth a fair hearing—a bad ground to build his present dogmatical and infallible tone upon! It is certain, that the common sense of the world condemns these violent changes of opinion; and if they do not prove that a man prefers his convenience to his virtue, they at least show that he prefers it to his reputation; for he loses his character by them. An apostate is a name that all men abhor, that no man ever willingly acknowledges; and the tergiversation which it denotes is not likely to come into much greater request, till it is no longer observed that a man seldom changes his principles except for his interest! Those who go over from the winning to the losing side, do not incur this appellation; and however we may count them fools, they can't be called knaves into the bargain.





## MINOR PIECES.

### MAHMOUD.

I have just read a most amazing thing,  
A true and noble story of a king :  
And to show all men, by these presents, how  
Good kings can please a Liberal, even now  
I'll vent the warmth it gave me in a verse :  
But recollect—these kings and emperors  
Are very scarce ; and when they do appear,  
Had better not have graced that drunken sphere,  
Which hurts the few whose brains can bear it best,  
And turns the unhappy heads of all the rest.  
*This* prince was worthy to have ruled a state  
Plain as his heart, and by its freedom great :  
But stripped of their guilt stuff, at what would t'others rate ?

There came a man, making his nasty moan,  
Before the Sultan Mahmoud on his throne,  
And crying out—" My sorrow is my right,  
And I *will* see the Sultan, and to-night."  
" Sorrow," said Mahmoud, " is a reverend thing :  
I recognize its right, as king with king ;  
Speak on." " A fiend has got into my house,"  
Exclaimed the staring man, " and tortures us :  
One of thine officers—he comes, the abhorr'd, .  
And takes possession of my house, my board,

My bed :—I have two daughters and a wife,  
 And the wild villain comes and makes me mad with life."  
 "Is he there now?" said Mahmoud :—"No;—he left  
 The house when I did, of my wits bereft;  
 And laugh'd me down the street, because I vowed  
 I'd bring the prince himself to lay him in his shroud.  
 I'm mad with want—I'm mad with misery,  
 And, oh thou Sultan Mahmoud, God cries out for thee!"

The Sultan comforted the man, and said,  
 "Go home, and I will send thee wine and bread,"  
 (For he was poor) "and other comforts. Go;  
 And, should the wretch return, let Sultan Mahmoud know."

In three days' time, with haggard eyes and beard,  
 And shaken voice, the suitor re-appeared,  
 And said, "He's come."—Mahmoud said not a word,  
 But rose and took four slaves, each with a sword,  
 And went with the vexed man. They reach the place,  
 And hear a voice, and see a female face,  
 That to the window fluttered in affright :  
 "Go in," said Mahmoud, "and put out the light;  
 But tell the females first to leave the room;  
 And, when the drunkard follows them, we come."

The man went in. There was a cry, and hark!  
 A table falls, the window is struck dark :  
 Forth rush the breathless women; and behind  
 With curses comes the fiend in desperate mind.  
 In vain : the sabres soon cut short the strife,  
 And chop the shrieking wretch; and drink his bloody life.

"Now light the light," the Sultan cried aloud.

'Twas done, he took it in his hand, and bowed  
Over the corpse, and looked upon the face;  
Then turned and knelt beside it in the place,  
And said a prayer, and from his lips there crept  
Some gentle words of pleasure, and he wept.  
In reverend silence the spectators wait,  
Then bring him at his call both wine and meat;  
And when he had refreshed his noble heart,  
He bade his host be blest, and rose up to depart.

The man amazed, all mildness now, and tears,  
Fell at the Sultan's feet, with many prayers,  
And begged him to vouchsafe to tell his slave,  
The reason first of that command he gave  
About the light; then, when he saw the face,  
Why he knelt down; and lastly, how it was,  
That fare so poor as his detained him in this place.

The Sultan said, with much humanity,  
" Since first I saw thee come, and heard thy cry,  
I could not get it from my head, that one  
By whom such daring villanies were done,  
Must be some lord of mine, perhaps a helpless son.  
Whoe'er he was, I knew my task, but feared  
A father's heart, in case the worst appeared :  
For this I had the light put out; but when  
I saw the face, and found a stranger slain,  
I knelt and thanked the sovereign arbiter,  
Whose work I had performed through pain and fear;  
And then I rose, and was refreshed with food,  
The first time since thou cam'st, and marr'dst my solitude."

## THE VENETIAN FISHERMAN.

[The burden, "With your gallant going vessel," is repeated at the end of every two lines.]

Oh, fisher of the waters, Fidelin,  
 Come fish for me, I pray,  
 With your gallant going vessel,  
 With your gallant pull away.  
 La ra lo, la ra lay.

And what am I to fish for?  
 Oh, a ring I've lost to day;  
 A hundred crowns I'll give thee,  
 And a purse both rich and gay.

Oh, a hundred crowns I'll have not,  
 Nor a purse both rich and gay;  
 Lady, I'll have a kiss of love,  
 And that shall be my pay.

O pescator dell' onda, Fidelin,  
 Vieni pescar in quà,  
 Colla bella sua barca,  
 Colla bella se ne va,  
 Fidelin, lin, la.

Che cosa vuoi ch'io peschi?  
 L'anel che m'è casca;  
 Ti darò cento scudi,  
 Sta borsa ricamà.

Non voglio cento scudi,  
 Nè borsa ricamà;  
 Voglio un bazin d'amore,  
 Con quel mi pagherà, &c.

## DIALOGUE FROM ALFIERI;

BETWEEN A CHAIR IN ITALY AND A GENTLEMAN FROM  
ENGLAND.

## CHAIR.

What is the reason, Sir, that every day  
You load me thus for nothing, hours and hours '  
Is this the manner, pray,  
Of making love in that cold clime of yours ?  
You may be heavy for a century,  
And get no further with the lovely she.

## GENTLEMAN.

And hast thou too conspired against me, chair '  
I love, tis true—too true—and dare not say it :  
But surely my whole air,  
My looks, my very silence, all display it :  
Every one, doubtless, must perceive the fire,  
That gnaws and eats me up with fierce desire. '

## CHAIR.

For God's sake, speak then, or you'll never do .  
What you do now by the fair lady's side,  
I boast of doing too :—  
It makes her mad to find you thus tongue-tied,  
To see you sit and stare, like a stuck pig :  
You make me speak myself, who am but fig.

## • SEGGIOLA.

• Signor, perchè del tuo disutil peso  
Ogni giorno mi vuoi gravar tant'ore?  
Si fa così all' amore  
Tra i gelati Britanni?  
Me premerai mill' anni,  
E mai non ti avverrà d'essere inteso.

## IL SEDUTO.

Sedia e tu pur congiuri a danno mio?  
Amo pur troppo è vero, e dir non l'oso  
Ma l'amor sì nascoso  
Non ho, che nel mio, sguardo  
Non legga ognun, ch'io ardo,  
Che mi consuma e rode un fier desio.

## SEGGIOLA.

Non di parlar, bensì d'an dartene osa:  
Ciò che tu fai della Sandrina accanto  
Di farlo anch'io mi vento.  
A lei l'anima e il senso  
Toglie il tuo starti intenso:  
Me fai parlare inanimata cosa.

## DIALOGUE

BETWEEN ALFIERI AND HIS FLORENTINE LAUNDRESS,  
NERA COLOMBOLI.\*

- A. Why, Mistress Nera, what the devil's here?  
To bring my stockings home at last undone?
- N. Undone! ah! God knows if I've sewn and sewn;  
But they so *spider-web*, it's a despair.
- A. So *spider-web*, school-mistress! Why, that's queer.
- N. How? Any thing that we put off and on,  
And wear and wear, till all the stuff is gone,  
Doesn't it *spider-web*? I think it's clear.
- A. *Spider-web*? I don't take it: what d'ye mean?
- N. Lord bless me, Sir, break me a spider's web,  
And see if I can sew it up again.
- A. Ah! It is I that am the unlick'd cub.  
I grow grey writing Tuscan, but in vain:  
A sorry graft, fit only for the grub.

- A. Che diavol fate voi, Madonna Nera?  
Darmi per sin co'buchi le calze?te?
- N. Co'buchi, eh? Dio 'l sa, s'i'l'ho rassette;  
Ma elle ragnano sì, ch'è una dispéra.
- A. *Ragnar*, cos'è, Monna vocaboliera?—

\* Alfieri, a Piedmontese, writes this sonnet (which is doubtless a true recital) to shew the difficulty he found in acquiring the niceties of the Tuscan tongue, and how well they are felt and understood by the common people.



N. Oh ! la roba, che l'uom mette e rimette,  
 Che vien via per tropp'uso a fette a fette,  
 Non ragna ella e mattina e giorno e sera ?

A. *Ragnar?* non l'ho più udito, e non l'intendo.

N. Pur gli è chiaro : la rompa un ragnatélo ;  
 Poi vedrem, se con l'ago i'lo rammendo.

A. Ah ! son pur io la bestia ! imbianco il pelo  
 Questa lingua scrivendo, e non sapendo :  
 Tosco innesto son io su immondo stelo.

#### A BLESSED SPOT.

FROM AN EPIGRAM OF ABULPADHEL AHMED, SURNAMED  
 AL HAMADANI, RECORDED IN D'HERBELOT.

HAMADAN is my native place ;  
 And I must say, in praise of it,  
 It merits, for its ugly face,  
 What every body says of it.

It's children equal it's old men  
 In vices and avidity ;  
 And they reflect the babes again  
 In exquisite stupidity.

## MOUTH VERSUS EYES.

FROM THE FRENCH OF LA FONTAINE.

CYPRUS to wit : Sweet Mouth *versus* Fine Eyes  
 Before the Chamber of Precedencies.  
 The case was opened by Sweet Mouth, who said,  
 " I summon Hearts. Let their reports be read.  
 Let them decide, my Lords, which of us two  
 Has most to say, to charm with, and to do.  
 Do, did I say ? I'm ready to take oath,  
 I've more than I can do, though nothing loth :  
 Only it seems, I've not the happy art,  
 Of shedding tears, like Eyes ! With all my heart :  
 My glory centers not in sight alone :  
 I satisfy three senses, they but one.  
 Odours and sounds to my sweet state belong,  
 And to delightful words I join a charming song.  
 My very sighs exhale a world of sweets,  
 Like zephyrs in the time of violets :  
 I have such ways to make a lover blest,  
 Such heaps—your Lordships will excuse the list :  
 And then, if Fine Eyes lay a wager with us,  
 To see who first can strike some heart beneath us,  
 Lord ! how Fine Eyes go toiling round and round,  
 While, speak we but a word—the man's on ground .  
 We want no tricks, not we, to give the rosy wound.  
 Let Fine Eyes shut, they're no such wonder, they .  
 Sweet Mouth has always treasures to display :  
 Coral without, and precious pearl within ;  
 Who, when I deign to play, can hope to win ?

Let presents fall in oriental showers,  
The favours I bestow beat all their dowers.  
Thirty-two pearls I wear about me here,  
Of which the least in beauty and least clear,  
Surpasses all with which the East is lit ;  
As many millions should not purchase it."

Thus spoke Sweet Mouth: on which was seen to rise  
A lover, who was counsel for Fine Eyes.  
He said, as you may guess, that for their part,  
Love, without them, could never find the heart :  
That as to tears, he felt, he must own, shocked,  
To hear their very tenderness rebuked.  
What could sighs do, he should be glad to know,  
Unless their warrants stood prepared to flow ?  
The fact was, both were good, and Sweet Mouth there  
Wronged her own cause, and hurt her character.  
There are delicious tears ; and there are sighs,  
On t' other hand, not over good or wise ;  
And Mouth had better, as she says she can,  
Have gained the cause by silence than this plan.  
" What are the silent charms, the godlike powers,  
To shew for her cause, when compared with our's ?  
We charm an hundred and a thousand ways,  
By sweetness, by a stealth, by sparkling rays,  
And by what Sweet Mouth blames—but is the part  
We glory in the most—the gentle art  
Of melting with a tear the manliest heart.  
Where Sweet Mouth gains a single conquest, we  
Roll in a round of ceaseless victory :  
And for one song in which she bears the prize,  
A hundred thousand sparkle with Fine Eyes.  
In courts, and cities, in the poet's groves,

'What is there heard of but our darts and loves ?  
Such sudden strokes we deal, such deeds we vaunt,  
That those do well, who say that we enchant :  
We come, and all surrender up their arms :  
Though often in the whirl of those alarms,  
Fine Mouth comes following in, and then pretends her charms.  
Heaven grant the people ask not who she is,  
Or she may speak, and " thank the Gods amiss."  
'Tis true, she has two words of magic touch,  
" I love ;" but cannot Fine Eyes say as much ?  
We have a tongue that with no words at all  
Can ask, and hint, and tell a tale, and call,  
And ravish more than all the pearls and songs,  
Which Sweet Mouth musters round her tongue of tongues."

The Counsel started here, and took occasion  
To make a very happy peroration.  
He caught a lady's eye, just coming in,  
With an approach the sweetest ever seen :  
He changed his tone, and with a gravity,  
Seconded well by a reposing eye,  
Said—" I've been taking up your Lordship's time  
With trifling matters fitter for a rhyme ;  
Look there : my Lords, I think 'twould be absurd,  
After that sight, to add another word.  
Pray give the sentence :—we are quite secure :  
*My client would not tire the court, I'm sure.*"

The lady, with a pretty shame, looked round  
With speaking eyes, which dealt so wide a wound,  
That all hands dropt their papers for surprise,  
And not a heart but gave it for Fine Eyes.  
Sweet Mouth at this, seeing how matters went,

And forced to raise some new astonishment,  
 Resumed, and said—" 'To what has just been dropt,  
 (Which, by the way, is shockingly corrupt)  
 There is one word alone I wish to say :  
 My Lords, Fine Eyes do little but by day :  
 That silent tongue of theirs, when in the dark  
 Makes but a sorry sort of frigid spark :  
 What I can do, needs surely no remark."

This reason settled the dispute *instantanément* :  
 Fine Eyes were much, but Sweet Mouth the Enchanter.  
 Fine Eyes, however, took it in good part,  
 And Sweet Mouth gave the Judge a kiss with all her heart.

Belle Bouche et Beaux Yeux plaidaient pour les honneurs,  
 Devant le juge d'Amathonte.

Belle Bouche disait—" Je m'en rapporte aux cœurs,  
 Et leur demande s'ils font compte  
 Des Beaux Yeux ainsi que de moi.  
 Qu'on examine notre emploi,

Nos traits, nos beautés, et nos charmes.  
 Que dis-je, notre emploi ? J'ai bien plus d'un métier,  
 Mais j'ignore celui de répandre des larmes :  
 De bon cœur, je le laisse aux Beaux Yeux tout entier.  
 Je satisfais trois sens, eux seulement la vue.

Ma gloire a bien plus d'étendue.  
 L'ouïe et l'odorat ont part à mes plaisirs,  
 Outre qu'aux doux propos je joins les chansonnettes.

Belle Bouche fait des soupirs,  
 Tels à peu près que les zéphirs  
 Dans la saison des violettes.

J'é sais par ceut moyens rendre heureux un amant—

Vous me dispenserez de vous dire, comment.

S'il s'agit entre nous d'une conquête à faire,

On voit Beaux Yeux se tourmenter ;

Belle Bouche n'a qu'à parler :

Sans artifice elle sait plaire.

Quand Beaux Yeux sont fermés, ce n'est pas grande affaire—

Belle Bouche à toute heure étale ses trésors ;

Le nacre est en dedans, le corail en dehors.

Quand je daigne m'ouvrir, il n'est richesse égale :

Les présens que nous fait la rive orientale

N'approchent pas les dons que je prétends avoir.

Tiente-deux perles se font voir,

Dont la moins belle et la moins claire

Passé celle que l'Inde a dans ses régions ;

Pour plus de trente-deux millions,

Je ne m'en voudrais pas defaire."

Belle Bouche ainsi harangua.

Un amant pour Beaux Yeux parla ;

Et, comme on peut penser, ne manqua pas de dire,

Que c'est par eux qu'amour s'introduit dans les cœurs.

Pourquoi les reprocher les pleurs ?

Il ne faut donc pas qu'on soupire ?

Mais tous les deux sont bons ; Belle Bouche a grand tort.

Il est des larmes de transport,

Il est des soupirs, au contraire,

Qui fort souvent ne disent rien.

Belle Bouche n'entend pas bien

Pour cette fois-là son affaire.

Qu'elle se taise, au nom des dieux !

Des appas qui lui sont répartis par les cieux,

Qu'a t-elle sur ce point qui nous soit comparable ?

Nous savons plaire en cent façons,  
Par l'éclat, la docteur, et cet art admirable  
De tendre aux cœurs des hameçons.  
Belle Bouche le blâme, et nous en faisons gloire :  
Si l'on tient d'elle une victoire,  
On en tient cent de nous ; et pour un chanson,  
Ou Belle Bouche est en renom,  
Beaux Yeux le sont en plus de mille.  
La cour, le parnasse, et la ville,  
Ne retentissent tout le jour  
Que du mot de Beaux Yeux et de celui d'Amour.  
Dès que nous paraissions, chacun nous rend les armes.  
Quiconque nous appellerait  
Enchanteurs, il ne mentirait,  
Tant est prompt l'effet de nos charmes.  
Sous une masque trompeur leur éclat fait si bien,  
Que maint objet tel quel, en plus d'une rencontre,  
Par ce moyen passe à la montre :  
On demande qui c'est, et souvent ce n'est rien.  
Cependant Beaux Yeux sont la cause  
Qu'on prend ce rien pour quelque chose.  
Belle Bouche dit " J'aime," et le disons nous pas ?  
Sans autre bruit notre langage,  
Muet qu'il est, plaît davantage  
Que ces perles, ces chants, et ces autres appas  
Avec quoi Belle Bouche engage."  
L'avocat de Beaux Yeux fit sa péroraison  
Des regards d'un intervenante.  
Cette belle approcha d'un façon charmante ;  
Puis il dit, en changeant le ton,  
" J'amuse ici la cour par des discours frivoles :  
Ai-je besoin d'autres paroles  
Que les yeux de Phillis ? Juge—regardez les ;

Puis prononcez votre sentence :  
Nous gagnerons notre procès.” ●

Phyllis eut quelque honte ; et puis sur l'assistance  
Reperdit des regards si remplis d'éloquence,  
Que les papiers tombaient des mains.  
Frappé de ses charmes soudains,  
L'auditoire inclinait pour Beaux Yeux dans son âme.  
Belle Bouche, en faveur des regards de la dame  
Voyant que les esprits s'allaient préoccupant,  
Prit la parole, et dit—“ A votre rhétorique,  
Dont Beaux Yeux vont ainsi les juges corrompant,  
Je ne veux opposer qu'un seul mot en réplique.

La nuit mon emploi dure encore—  
Beaux Yeux sont lors de peu d'usage.  
On les laisse en repos, et leur muet langage  
Fait un assez froid personnage.”

Cet on en demeura d'accord.  
Cet on raison regla la chose :  
On préféra Belle Bouche à Beaux Yeux ;  
En quelques chefs pourtant ils eurent gain de cause.  
Belle Bouche baisa le juge de son mieux.









